

A  
COMPARISON  
OF THE  
INSTITUTIONS OF MOSES  
WITH THOSE OF  
THE HINDOOS

AND  
OTHER ANCIENT NATIONS;  
WITH  
REMARKS ON MR. DUPUIS'S ORIGIN of all  
RELIGIONS,  
The LAWS and INSTITUTIONS of MOSES  
METHODIZED,

AND  
An ADDRESS to the JEWS on the present state of the  
WORLD and the PROPHECIES relating to it.

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By JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, L. L. D. F. R. S. & C.

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*Trutina ponantur eadem*

*Horace.*

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PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR BY A. KENNEDY.

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THE  
DEDICATION,

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TO HIS GRACE

THE  
DUKE OF GRAFTON.

MY LORD,

**I** TAKE the liberty to dedicate this work to your Grace, not so much as to one of the most respectable of the English nobility, or one whom I honour for his general maxims and conduct in the political world, as for having, in my opinion, done yourself much greater honour by your attachment to the cause of Christianity, in an age in which many who occupy a distinguished rank in life pay little attention to it, in which many openly abandon the profession of it, and in which many of those who profess their belief of it appear (if we may judge of men's feelings and sentiments

*timents by their conduct) to have no just sense of its real value.*

*Not to be ashamed of Christ in such circumstances as these, is no small merit, tho' in those who derive emolument from the profession, or whose connections in life lay them under no great temptation to infidelity, it is little or none. It is our suffering in the cause, in which the loss of general estimation is no inconsiderable article, that is the best proof of our sincerity, and of our title to be acknowledged by our Lord and master as his good and faithful servants, when he shall come to receive the kingdom that is destined for him and his true disciples.*

*In that day, which I am willing to think is now at no great distance, to have given any countenance to those who have laboured to promote the cause of Christian truth, and especially such as are exposed to some degree of odium on that account, will be considered as having bestowed favours on disciples in the name of disciples, and will not be without its reward.*

*That your Grace's very important services to the cause of Christian literature, and Christian truth,*  
*may*

DEDICATION.

*may have all the success to which they are intitled, is  
the sincere wish and prayer of,*

*My Lord,*

*Your Grace's most obedient*

*humble Servant,*

*J. PRIESTLEY.*

*NORTHUMBERLAND, Nov. 1, 1799.*



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T H E  
P R E F A C E.

**I**T has long appeared to me that a fair comparison of the ancient heathen religions with the system of revelation would contribute in an eminent degree to establish the evidences of the latter. Its superiority in sentiment and practice to any thing that the most enlightened of mankind have ever devised is so great, that it cannot be rationally accounted for, but by supposing it to have had a truly divine origin.

On this account I gave a general view of the ancient heathen religions, and of their philosophy as far as it was connected with religion, in the first volume of my *Discourses* delivered at Philadelphia, and a more detailed account of Mahometanism, and the circumstances attending its propagation, in the second volume. I then promised to draw out a comparison of the institutions of the Hindoos, and those of other ancient nations, that have been most admired for their early civilization and science, with those of Moses, with which they were cotemporary. This promise I have endeavoured to discharge in the present performance, in which I have made the best use that I could of the ample materials

materials with which we are now provided for the purpose.

With these I have been chiefly furnished by the friendship of Dr. Andrew Ross, lately of Philadelphia, but now returned to his native country, Scotland. He shewed much zeal in promoting my undertaking; and I think it a circumstance of some weight even in the argument, that a person who has seen so much of the world as he has done, and who is so well acquainted with the principles and effects of religion in all parts of the East, is sincerely attached to Christianity. Miserably as this religion is corrupted in the Turkish dominions, he does not hesitate to declare that the Christians are a better people than the Mahometans, or the Hindoos, much as many unbelievers affect at least to boast of them, with a view to disparage Christianity.

I have not, however, in this work confined myself to the religion of the Hindoos, but have given the best account that I have been able to collect of the general outline of the religion of the Egyptians, and that of other ancient nations of which we have any certain knowledge. And as general principles and customs continue long unchanged, especially in the East, there cannot be any doubt but that we are sufficiently well acquainted with every thing of much consequence with the respect to the state of religion

religion in the time of Moses, and from the very commencement of polytheism and idolatry. And to every thing relating to this subject it behoves all the friends of revelation to give the closest attention. Judging of others by myself, I can assure them that the comparison will perpetually suggest to them the most lively sentiments of gratitude to the sovereign disposer of all things, ~~that~~ that they were born in a Christian country, and never had their minds bewildered, and debased, by the miserable superstition of any system of heathenism, or of Mahometanism. The religion of the most enlightened of the heathens was always most absurd and despicable, while that of revelation was from the beginning truly rational and respectable, and as favourable to every virtue, as the other was to various kinds of vice.

Having compared the institutions of Moses with those of the Hindoos, and of other ancient nations, it seemed not improper to add some remarks on the late elaborate work of Mr. Dupuis, on *the origin of all religions*. That I have combated his principles with success is no great cause of boasting. It had, indeed, been done before by Mr. Estlin of Bristol in England, in his *Discourse on the nature and causes of Atheism*, which, together with another excellent and well written tract of his on the *evidences*



*dences of revealed religion*, (in which he takes particular notice of *Mr. Paines Age of Reason*,) I take this opportunity of recommending to my readers. I will add that I am not a little proud of having had such a pupil, so judicious an advocate for Christian truth, in an age in which the fascination of worldly pursuits has withdrawn so many from it.

An *Address to the Jews* seemed not improper to be subjoined to a defence of their religion; and the present most extraordinary state of things in the political world led me to think there might be a still greater propriety in this, considering the great interest that, according to the prophecies of scripture, they have in it. If my mind be thought to have been too strongly impressed by present appearances, and that I look sooner than we are authorized to do for the fulfilment of the prophecies which have been the subject of so much discussion by Jews and Christians, and my apprehensions appear to be ill founded, I shall only share the fate of many learned and worthy men who have gone before me. In this publication little will be found more than I advanced in my *Fast Sermon for the year 1794*, which has been reprinted in this country, tho' in the progress of the war in Europe some events have taken place exceedingly favourable to the apprehensions I then expressed.

As

As I wished to quote all my authorities with as much exactness as possible, I have seldom departed from each writer's mode of spelling Hindoo words; and in this respect they differ exceedingly from each other. But in order to remedy this inconvenience, I shall give a list of *synonyms*, with the different names of the same Hindoo deities. Also, as I often abridge the titles of some of the books that I quote, I shall give them more at length, that the less learned reader may be under no mistake with respect to them.

It was my intention at one time, instead of the mere titles of the *methodical arrangement of the laws and institutions of Moses*, with references to the places in which they may be found, to have printed the whole at full length, and with notes. But as this would have made another volume, about as large as the present, I was deterred by the consideration of the expence of printing it. The Notes that I had prepared will be found among those which I have drawn up *on all the books of scripture*, which is a work of considerable extent, and will be at the service of my friends and the public whenever it shall be called for.

This is also the situation of my *Church History*, which I have now brought down to the present times,

times, and which will make about five such volumes as the two that are already printed. Having no other works of much consequence in view, and being now too far advanced in life to undertake any thing very new, I shall keep giving my time to the improvement of these two; and whenever I meet with sufficient encouragement they shall be printed. I do not mean profit (for I shall cheerfully give my time and labour to what I think to be calculated to serve the cause of truth and virtue) but such assistance as will enable me to print the works without more expence to myself than I can conveniently afford.

I have encouragement enough to send my works to be printed in England. But besides the risk of sending manuscripts to such a distance, at such a time as this, I could not be satisfied without the power of correcting the press myself. I must, therefore, wait for a more promising state of things, here or in Europe; believing, in the mean time, that whatever shall appear to be the order of providence, tho' it should be the total suppression of all my labours, as it was of many of them at the riots in Birmingham, it will not be a subject of just complaint. Ourselves, and all our labours, are at the disposal of the great Being who made us, and who has endued us with whatever



## P R E F A C E.

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ever powers we are possessed of. A diligent and well intended application of them is all that we can command, and therefore all that will be required of us.

As before the riots in Birmingham I was engaged with some friends in a *new translation of the scriptures*, and had nearly finished the part that I had undertaken, which was the *Hagiographa*, and which was destroyed at that time, I shall here publish the *Plan* which I drew of that undertaking. If there be any merit in it, it may be resumed by others in more favourable circumstances.

Since thus much of this Preface was written I have met with a work of Mr. Robison's, intitled *Proofs of a Conspiracy against all the Religions and Governments of Europe, carried on in the secret Meetings of Free Masons, Illuminati, and reading Societies*. In this work I am charged, p. 354 with "preaching the detestable doctrines of illuminatism," which he describes as "subversive of all religion, all morality, and all regular government." He says, p. 355, that "I have given the most promising specimens of my docility in the principles of illuminatism, and have already passed thro' several degrees of initiation. From my doctrine of materialism," he says, p. 358, "there is but a step to the atheism of Diderot



rot and Condorcet;" and p. 355, "I have been preparing the minds of my readers for atheism by my theory of the mind, and my commentary on the unmeaning jargon of Dr. Hartley."

I rejoice in having my name connected with that of so great and excellent a man, a friend of Christianity, piety, and virtue, if ever there was one; and who has written infinitely more to the purpose in their defence than Mr. Robison. Admitting the doctrine of vibrations (on which he might have seen that neither Dr. Hartley nor myself lay any stress) or ~~that~~ any other hypothesis concerning the nature of intelligence, to be ill founded, do we deny that man is possessed of intelligence? Do we deny that there is a supreme intelligence, that there is a righteous moral government of the world, and that men will be rewarded for their virtues, and punished for their vices, in a future state? To advance solid arguments in proof of those great doctrines, the foundation of all religion and morality, which is the object of Dr. Hartley's work, and of many of mine, is, surely, a better evidence of our sincerity than mere declamation, or than the detection of societies hostile to religion and government; tho' I readily allow Mr. Robison to have much merit on this account.

He

He has given me much information on a subject of which I am wholly ignorant, having never been a free mason, a member of any secret society, or of any political society whatever. I have no secrets. I write for the public at large, and my writings are open to examination, and of course to misrepresentation, and to such abuse as Mr. Robison and many others have poured upon them. But the time is coming that will try every man's work, and every man's thoughts. With respect to myself, that time cannot be very distant; and I hope I may say without subjecting myself to any harsh censure, that, after a life of much activity, and many trials, I do not wish myself any farther from that time than I am.

Because, writing soon after the French revolution, and while the French king was living, I augured well of it, Mr. Robison plainly enough insinuates that I am an enemy to all good government, and wish to introduce universal anarchy, and licentiousness. But is this candid, or fair? Notwithstanding, however, all the evil that has taken place (which has chiefly been owing to a most impolitic, and I will add wicked and unprincipled coalition of other powers to dictate to, and oppress, that country) I still trust that the consequence of that revolution will be great and happy, and that  
the

the final issue of the present disturbed state of the world will be that glorious and most desirable state of things which is the subject of so many prophecies, tho', according to the same prophecies, the state of things preceding this will be most calamitous. Present appearances greatly favour this expectation. The eye of sense sees the calamity, and the eye of faith sees with equal clearness the good that is to follow it.

*Synonyms of Hindoo Names and Deities.*

**H**INDOO, Gentoo.

Veda, Ved, Beda, Bhade.

Vedam, Bedang.

Shaftah, Shaftar, Sastra.

Caliongum, Cal Jug.

Mahabad, Menu, Mouni, Adam, Noah.

Satyavarman, Satiavarto, Sattiavattna, Satyavarman, Noah.

Brahma, Birma, Burmha, Brumma.

Vichnou, Bistnoo, Kistna, Kissen, Christnou, Christen, Narayen, Jaggernat, Rhaam.

Siva, Seib, Chib, Chiven, Tchiven, Mahadeva, Moideb, Mahadeo, Moifoor, Ifuren, Routren, Ruddery.

Budda,



Budda, Bod, Pout, Boutta, Fo, Odin, Xaca.

Bramin, Brahmen.

Chatariya, Cheterce.

Vaiffya, Bice.

Sudra, Sooder, Choutre.

Muni, Menu.

Beafs, Biache, Vyafa.

Gayatri, Goitre.

Gebre, Parfi.

Faquir, Joguis.

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*The Titles of some of the books quoted in this Work.*

**D**ISSERTATIONS and Miscellaneous pieces relating to the history, and antiquities, the arts, sciences, and literature of Asia, 3 vols. 8vo. 1792, &c.

Ezourvedam, on Ancien Commentaire du Vedam. Iverdun, 1778.

Histoire du Christianisme des Indes, par La Croze, 2 vols. 12mo. 1758.

Sketches chiefly relating to the History, Religion, Learning, and Manners, of the Hindoos. 2 vols. 8vo. 1792.

A Code



A Code of Gentoo Laws, or Ordinations of the Pundits, from a Persian Translation, made from the original written in the Shanscrit language, 8vo. 1777.

Northern Antiquities, translated from Mr. Mallet by Dr. Percy, 2 vols. 8vo. 1770.

The Agreement of the Customs of the East-Indians with those of the Jews and other antient People, 8vo. 1705.

An Account of the Religion, Manners, and Learning of Malabar, in several Letters written by some of the most learned Men of that Country to the Danish Missionaries. By Mr. Philips, 1717.

Histoire de la Religion des Banians, &c. traduit de l'Anglois, de Henry Lord, 12mo. 1667.

The Ceremonies and religious Customs of the various Nations of the known World. By B. Picart, abridged from the French Original, Folio, 1741.

A Relation of the Voyage to Siam performed by six Jesuits, sent by the French King in 1685. London, 1688.

A Dissertation on the Languages, Literature, and Manners, of Eastern Nations, by John Richardson, 8vo. 1778.

Voyage

Voyage de Niebuhr en Arabie, 2 Toms. 8vo. 1780.

A new Account of the East-Indies, by Alexander Hamilton, 2 vols. 8vo. 1727.

A Journey over Land to the East Indies, by Donald Campbell of Barbree, 8vo. Philadelphia, 1797.

Oeuvres de Boulanger, 8 Tom. 1778.

N. B. The passage of this work referred to p. 221, is vol. 1, p. 58, is *Antiquité dévoilée*, Liv. i. cap. 2. Note.

*A PLAN to procure a continually improving Translation of the Scriptures.*

I. **L**ET three persons, of similar principles and views, procure the assistance of a number of their learned friends, and let each of them undertake the translation of a portion of the whole Bible, engaging to produce it in the space of a year.

II. Let each of the translations be carefully perused by some other person than the translator himself; and especially let each of the three principals

cipals peruse the whole, and communicate their remarks to the translators.

III. Let the three principals have the power of making what alterations they please. But if the proper translator prefer his own version, let the three principals, when they print the work, insert his version in the notes, or margin, distinguished by his signature.

IV. If any one of the three differ in opinion from the other two, let his version be also annexed with his signature.

V. Let the whole be printed in one volume, without any *notes*, except as few as possible, relating to the version, or the phraseology.

VI. Let the translators, and especially the three principals, give constant attention to all other new translations of the scriptures, and all other sources of information, that they may avail themselves of them in all subsequent editions, so that this version may always be in a state of improvement.

VII. Let the three principals agree upon certain *rules of translating*, to be observed by all the rest.

VIII. On the death of any of the three principals,

pals, let the survivors make choice of another to supply his place.

IX. Let all the profits of the publication be disposed of by the three principals to some public institution, in England or any other part of the world ; or in any other manner that they shall think most subservient to the cause of truth.

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## RULES OF TRANSLATING.

I. LET the translators insert in the text whatever they think it most probable that the authors really wrote, if it has the authority of any ancient version or MS. but if it differ from the present Hebrew or Greek copies, let the version of the present copies be inserted in the margin.

II. If the translators give the preference to any emendation of the text not authorized by any MS. or ancient version, let such conjectural emendation be inserted in the margin only.

III. Let the additions in the Samaritan copy of the Pentateuch be inserted in the text, but distinguished from the rest.

IV. Let



IV. Let not the present English version be changed, except for the sake of some improvement.

V. In the Old Testament, let the word Jehovah be rendered by Jehovah, and also the word *kyrios* in the New, in passages in which there is an allusion to the Old, or where it may be proper to distinguish God from Christ.

VI. Let the present division of chapters be adhered to, with as little variation as possible, and the whole be divided into *paragraphs*, not exceeding about twenty of the present verses; but let all the present divisions of chapters and verses be noted in the margin.

VII. To each chapter let there be prefixed a summary of the contents, as in the common version.

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## ERRATA.

N. B. (b) signifies from the bottom of the page.

Page	28. l. 1.	1. (b) for mystical theology, read mystical philosophy.	
	53. l. 8.	for whom,	read whose.
	56. l. 9.	of,	of a.
	61. l. 9.	(b) these,	there.
	88. l. 6.	is,	in.
	151. l. 13.	their,	these.
	218. l. 2.	(b) the,	for the.
	294. l. 11.	(b) institution,	institutions.
	298. l. 2.	(b) it,	is.
	301. l. 9.	(b) in,	ne.
	317. l. 10.	(b) and was,	was.
	327. l. 4.	(b) our,	own.
	341. l. 7.	Christ,	of Christ.
	372. l. 7.	respect,	with respect.
	398. l. 1.	(b) a,	of.
	405. l. 3.	(b) Edometes,	the Edomites.
	410. l. 8.	(b) is,	is so.

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ERRATA

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THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE HINDOOS

hoped we shall not be long without an English  
version of books of so much curiosity. In the mean  
time we have other works composed by Hindoos,  
which contain a faithful account of their religion,  
importance in them; and therefore, as we cannot  
be in any doubt with respect to their genuine prin-  
ciples, it is our power to examine them without  
any danger of falling into the least mistake of con-  
fidence; the more exact and diligent authorities  
may be better be produced from the Veda's them-  
selves.

## INTRODUCTION.

The Hindoos and their institutions are held in  
the highest estimation by many Europeans who

**T**HE institutions of the Hindoos, civil and  
religious, are the most respectable for their  
antiquity of any that now subsist, at least of any  
that are extant in writing. The fundamental prin-  
ciples of them were probably prior to those of  
Moses, the whole of the system in its present state  
could not have been much later than his time, and  
we are now happily in possession of the most  
authentic documents concerning it. We only  
want a translation into some European language  
of the *Veda's*, which contain all their laws, as they  
are said to have come from the mouth of Brahma,  
by the immediate direction of the Supreme Being.  
The original we are informed is now in the pos-  
session of an Englishman, and therefore it is to be  
hoped



hoped we shall not be long without an English version of books of so much curiosity. In the mean time we have other works composed by Hindoos, which contain a faithful account of every thing of importance in them; and therefore, as we cannot be in any doubt with respect to their genuine principles, it is in our power to examine them without any danger of falling into the least mistake of consequence; tho' more express and direct authorities may hereafter be produced from the Veda's themselves.

The Hindoos and their institutions are held in the highest admiration by many Europeans who have cultivated an acquaintance with them. 'They have,' says Mr. Holwell, 'from the earliest times been the ornaments of the creation.' Mr. Langles the French translator of the *Hitopades*, a curious book of Indian Fables, calls the authors of the Hindoo religion 'venerable institutors, who delivered precepts of the soundest morality, and a system of metaphysics truly sublime, hid under an ingenious veil of allegory. (*Preliminary Discourse*, p. 7.) Their religion, he says, p. 10. reputable in its errors, boasts, like every other, a celestial origin.'

Every thing of great antiquity relating to any part of the human species must be interesting, not only to their posterity, but to all mankind; as the institutions

institutions of their remote ancestors must be capable of receiving some illustration from the knowledge of them. For some relation or other, by connection or opposition, must have subsisted between them. 'In the religion of the Hindoos,' says Mr. Langles, 'notwithstanding all the alterations it has undergone, we distinguish in its morals, in its doctrines, and in its ceremonies, those of the Egyptians and Jews; who have done nothing but *ape* (*singer*) the latter, of the Chinese, of the Greeks, of the Romans, and even of the Christians.'

This writer farther says, p. 22. "The five Veda's, of which four only now remain, seem to be the prototype of the five *kings* of the Chinese, and the five books of Moses, who have only copied Egyptian works, originally from India." Then, speaking of the Egyptians and Jews, he says, p. 24, 'They have altered them, and mixed them with fables, to adapt them to the genius and taste of their countrymen; but they have not been able to efface marks of resemblance, which would be more striking if we had a more complete translation of the Indian original, and of the Chinese imitation. I have, however, collected circumstances of comparison sufficient to convince the most incredulous if they be honest. This I reserve for a particular dissertation on the conformity

' mity of the Chinese, the Egyptians, and Jews,  
 ' with the Indians. I consider," he says, page 15,  
 ' the Pentateuch as an abridgment of the Egypti-  
 ' an books, the original of which still exists in In-  
 ' dia, where literature was cultivated long before  
 ' Egypt was made habitable by the labour of men.  
 ' Moses," he says p. 14, " educated at the court of  
 ' Pharaoh, endowed with talents and knowledge,  
 ' which never entered into the head of a Jew, made  
 ' use of it to form a body of laws for a small horde  
 ' of slaves, whose escape he favoured.'

This having been advanced, it behoves both  
 Jews and Christians to consider what relation their  
 institutions bear to those from which they are said to  
 have been derived. Our author, we see, has pro-  
 mised to do this for us in another work; but as I have  
 not heard of its being executed, and it is uncertain  
 whether his design will ever be carried into executi-  
 on, it is worth our while, in a business of so much  
 importance, to examine the probable ground of his  
 opinion. And from the attention that I have gi-  
 ven to the subject I am under no apprehension of  
 the institutions of Moses losing any part of the res-  
 pect that has hitherto been paid to them, in con-  
 sequence of a fair comparison with those of the Hin-  
 doos, or those of any other ancient nation.

On the contrary, I am persuaded that the wis-  
 dom of the laws, and of the religion, prescribed in  
 the



the writings of Moses, and in the books of the Old Testament in general, which are written in the same spirit, will appear to so much advantage, when contrasted with those of the Hindoos, that, considering the little opportunity that Moses, or any person of his nation, could have had for acquiring superior knowledge, the origin of his institutions cannot but be concluded to have been divine. That the five books of Moses could have been composed from the five Veda's, if ever there were five (for three only are mentioned in the oldest Hindoo writings and a fourth was added afterwards) could hardly, I should have thought, have been asserted by any person who had read the pentateuch, and such accounts as we have of the Veda's.

The *Institutions of Menu* are next in authority to the Veda's themselves, and they contain a faithful account of every thing that is of much importance in them; and of this work Sir William Jones, who translated it, says, "It is a system of despotism and priestcraft, both indeed limited by law, but artfully constructed to give mutual support, tho' with mutual checks. It is filled with strange conceits in Metaphysics, and Natural Philosophy, with idle superstitions, and with a scheme of theology most obscurely figurative, and consequently liable to dangerous misconception. It abounds with minute and childish formalities, with ceremonies



‘ ceremonies generally absurd, and often ridiculous. The punishments are partial and fanciful ;  
 ‘ for some crimes dreadfully cruel, and for others  
 ‘ reprehensively slight, and the very morals, tho’ rigid enough on the whole, are in one or two instances, as in the case of light oaths, and pious perjuries, unaccountably relaxed. Nevertheless, a  
 ‘ spirit of sublime devotion, of benevolence to  
 ‘ mankind, and of amiable tenderness to all sentient creatures, pervades the whole work.” (*Dissertations relating to Asia, Preface, p. 18.*)

These two men, Mr. Langles and Sir William Jones, both translators of Hindoo writings. must have had very different ideas of their institutions ; and when men of learning, equally acquainted with the religion and language of these people, differ so widely in their opinion, on a subject of so much importance, it behoves every person who can do it to judge for himself. Having attentively considered all that Europeans as yet know of the Hindoos, I must say that I entirely agree with Sir William Jones in the former part of the opinion given above, but not in the latter part of it. There are, no doubt, some sentiments of just, and what may be called *sublime*, devotion in the Hindoo writings. For if devotional sentiments be just, they must, from the greatness of the object, partake of the sublime. But the general character of the devotion

votion of the Hindoos is that of a debasing superstition; and their tenderness for animals is chiefly superstition and weakness, derived from their doctrine of transmigration. But tho' I give my opinion with this freedom, my readers will have it in their power to judge for themselves, from the copious extracts which I shall lay before them from Hindoo books, and the testimony of travellers of the greatest credit, such as are allowed to have been the best informed concerning the religion, the customs, and the government, of Hindostan.

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## SECTION I.

*Of the Antiquity of the Hindoo Nation and Religion.*

THE Hindoos, like the Egyptians, and most other ancient nations, make a boast of the most extravagant antiquity; and some persons, evidently with a view to undervalue the Jews, give or affect to give, them credit. Mr. Langles says, (*Hitopades, Discours Preliminaire*, p. 12,) 'many thousand years before these people' (among whom he includes the Egyptians, Jews, and Chinese,) 'formed themselves into societies, or ever thought

' thought of forming a religion, the civilized Indians adored the Supreme Being, eternal, almighty and allwise, divided into three persons.'

Happily, these extravagant accounts contain data by means of which we are able, from our knowledge of the course of nature, to reduce these enormous antiquities within the bounds of reason and probability. An excellent specimen of this has been given by Sir Isaac Newton, in his *Chronology of ancient kingdoms amended*. By such lights as these, persons of sagacity and good judgment have made it appear with sufficient evidence, that the oldest accounts of the Hindoo nation do not in reality go any farther back than to the deluge mentioned in the books of Moses, and that their religious institutions were consequently posterior to that event. Some unbelievers in revelation have had the candour to avow this opinion. There is, however, no doubt of the very great antiquity of the Hindoo religion.

Sir William Jones says. (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 1. p. 199) ' The first corruption of the purest and oldest religion, which consisted in the worship of one God, the maker and governor of all things, was the system of the Indian theology, invented by the Bramins, and prevailing in those territories where the books of Mahabad or Menu is at this hour the standard of all religious and



(and moral duties.' In his preface to the Institutions of Menu he says, p. 4. 'They are supposed by the Bramins, to have been promulgated by Menu, the son or grandson of Brahma, or the first of created beings. This work, he says, p. 7, is one of the oldest compositions existing, written about three hundred years after the Veda's, or about 1280 years before Christ.' According to this account, the Veda's were composed about 1580 years before Christ, or about one hundred years before the time of Moses. Menu himself, to whom these Institutes are ascribed, was, Sir William Jones is of opinion, the same with Adam. (*Preface*, p. 12) and that a second Menu was Noah (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 1, p. 324.) The opinion of Mr. Freret and Mr. Bailly, no friends of revelation, are nearly the same with this of Sir William Jones. According to the former, the period called *Calougam* is the commencement of real Hindoo history, every thing preceding being merely fabulous; and then the year 1778 will correspond to the Hindoo year 3102 (*Ezoarvedam*, vol. 2, p. 216) Mr. Bailly says the Indian astronomy had its origin 3102 years before Christ (*Sketches relating to the history, &c. of the Hindoos*, p. 307) Nay the most learned of the Bramins themselves say that the Veda's are



der than 4866 years (*Ezburvedam*, vol. 2, p. 116) which carries them to about 260 years after the deluge.

This is the date that Mr. Holwell assigns to the original *Charlak Bhade Shastah*, as he calls the work. A thousand years after this, he says, some expounders of the work published a paraphrase of it, retaining the original intire. This was called *Chakta Bhade*. From this he says the polytheism of the Gentoos took its rise. Five hundred years later a new deposition of the *Shastah* was published called *Muchlorrah Bhade Shastah*, nor the *eighteen books of divine words*, in which the original text was in a manner sunk, and alluded to only. At this time many of the ceremonies and exterior modes of worship were introduced, and the whole of their religion enveloped in impenetrable obscurity and allegory, and the laity excluded from the knowledge of the ancient scriptures. This, he says, occasioned a schism among the Gentoos, the Bramins of Coromandel and Malabar adhering to the old system, and those who resided near the Ganges adopting the innovations." (*Interesting Historical Events*, vol. 2, p. 14, Gr.)

Mr. Dow says, "the first credible account we have of the Beda's is that about the commencement of the Cal Jug, of which the year of Christ 1769 was the 4887th, they were written, or rather

collected, by a great philosopher called *Beas Mun*, or *Beas the inspired*. This learned man is otherwise called *Crishen Basdeo*, and is said to have lived in the reign of *Judisther*, near the present city of *Dehli*. (*History of Indostan*, p. 27.)

According to the learned Pundits who compiled the Code of *Gentoo* laws, the *Shaffer*, that is the *Veda's*, were not composed till crimes became common. (*Introduction*, p. 101.) They say, p. 102, that for some periods after the creation, there were no crimes, magistrates, or punishments; and as the *Hindoos* believe in the deluge, which they say destroyed all the human race, except eight persons, the composition of these books must necessarily have been a considerable time after that event. For their laws are contained in these books.

It is the opinion of *Sir William Jones* that the origin of the *Hindoo* nation and government is to be looked for in *Iran*, or *Persia*, where a great monarchy was established before the *Assyrian*, called by the *Oriental* historians the *Pishdadian* dynasty; and they say that "the first of these ancient monarchs, whom they call *Mahabad*, or *Menu*, received from the Creator a sacred book, in a heavenly language, meaning the *Veda's* (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 2, p. 111.) This first monarch, they also say, divided the people into four orders, the religious, the military, the commercial, and

the servile, (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 1, p. 197. 206.) This, therefore, must have been a Hindoo government.

In the reign of Hushang, the third of the Pishadian race, "a reformation, he says was made in the religious system, when the complex polytheism of the preceding times was rejected, and religion was reduced to what is usually called *Sabaism*, which consisted chiefly in the worship of the sun, moon and stars \* ib. p. 198. The laws of Mahabad were, however, retained, and his superstitious veneration for fire, p. 200. On this the favourers of the old religion retired to Hindostan, and their oldest existing laws forbade them ever to return, or to leave the country they now inhabit, p. 206.

Another reformation, or change, in the system was made, he says, under Gushtasp, in the next, or the Kaianite dynasty, thought to have been the same with Darius Hystaspis, &c. "This was effected by Zeratushtr, or Zoroaster; he introduced genii, or angels, presiding over months and days, new ceremonies in the veneration shewn to fire, and gave out a new work, which he said came from heaven, but withal he established the adoration of the Supreme Being, ib. p. 200. This work was lost

\* *Sabaism*, being a much more simple religion than that of the Hindoos, must, I doubt not, have preceded it.



at the conquest of Persia by the Mahometans; but the priests of that religion have composed another from what they were able to recollect of their institutions. It is called *Zendavesta*, and has been translated into French by Mr. Anquetil."

The followers of Zeratust, now called Gebres, or Parfi's, persecuted those of the religion immediately preceding, and these also took refuge in India, where they wrote a number of books, which are now very scarce, p. 182. They resemble, Sir William Jones says, the Hindoo sects of *Sauras*, and *Saguinas*, of which the last mentioned is very numerous at Benares.

Another innovator in the religion of the East before the christian æra was *Budda*, generally supposed to have been the same with the Fo of the Chinese, the Somonocodom of Siam, the Xaca of Japan and the Odin of the North of Europe. According to Sir William Jones, he disapproved of the Veda's; because they enjoined the sacrifice of cattle, p. 23, and made his appearance in 1027 B. C. His disciples are thought to have been the same with the *Sammanes* who were opposed to the Brachmanes of the Greek historians. But the Sammanes were, I doubt not, of much greater antiquity, as also was Somonocodom. The followers of Budda gave great umbrage to the Bramins, who never ceased to persecute them till they had effected



and their extirpation from Hindostan by fire and sword, about five hundred years ago (*Exourvedam*, p. 72, 105, *Modern Universal History* vol. 7, p. 185.)

There is, however, a great resemblance between the system of the Hindoos and that of Buddha; and perhaps with a view to conciliate these people, the Bramins of Cash make Buddha the ninth avatar or transformation of Vishnow (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 2, p. 13.) This religion is that which prevails in India beyond the Ganges. It was received in China A. D. 65, and is established in Japan. A religion very similar to this is also that of the Lamas of Tibet.

Indeed, all the deviations from the original Hindoo system retained the same general principles. The advocates of them all held the doctrine of the pre-existence of souls, their subsisting and acting independently of bodies, and their transmigration into other bodies after death. They had the same low opinion of matter, and the same veneration for the elements of fire and water, as purifiers of the soul. They had similar restrictions with respect to food, the same addictedness to divination, and the same idea of the use of corporeal austerities for the expiation of sin. I shall, therefore in this work consider what I find concerning any of them, as equally to my purpose, tho' I shall not fail to distinguish what

what belongs to each. They are all very ancient oriental religions, and it may not be amiss to compare the institutions of Moses with the most improved of them, as well as with those that were coeval with himself.

## SECTION II.

*Points of Resemblance between the Religions of the Hindoos and that of the Egyptians, Greeks, and other western Nations.*

IT may be thought to be of some importance to compare the institutions of Moses with those with which he may be supposed to have been acquainted, rather than with those which were merely of equal antiquity. But in fact those of the Hindoos are in this state, since the same general principles may be found in them and in those of the Egyptians and other nations in the neighbourhood of Palestine. Indeed, it is probable from this and other circumstances, that the commencement of all these systems which deviated from the religion of the patriarchs (which is preserved in the writings of Moses) was prior to the general dispersion of mankind.

A system so ancient as that of the Hindoos must have been formed about the same time with that of the Egyptians, from which that of the Greeks, and other western nations was in some measure derived; and accordingly many points of resemblance have been observed between them, too many and too striking, to have been fortuitous. Even some of the inhabitants of Ethiopia appear to have been of the same origin with those of Hindostan (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 1, p. 112) and both the Ethiopians and Egyptians seem to have had some connection or intercourse with the Hindoos; but of what kind it was, or when it subsisted, we have no certain account; and they have been so long separated, that at present they are in total ignorance of each other.

According to Eusebius and Syncellus, some people from the river Indus settled in the neighbourhood of Egypt in the reign of Amenophis, the father of Sesostris, and many Egyptians, banished by their princes, settled in other countries, and some went so far as India (*Ezourvedam*, p. 15. 16.) It is also supposed that many of the priests of Egypt left the country on the invasion of it by Cambyfes. But such circumstances as these are not sufficient to account for the great resemblance between the two systems. The Hindoos themselves say that their sacred books came from the West.

West. Ib. p. 17. But themselves, no doubt, as well as their books, came from that quarter, and their sacred books were probably composed while the seat of the empire was in Persia.

There are a few Egyptian words similar to those in the ancient language of Hindostan, which seem to shew that the two people had some affinity to each other. *Brama*, pronounced *birouma* in Malabar, signifies *man*, and so did *pirouma* in the language of Egypt. (*La Croze*, p. 225) The name of the river of Egypt, *Nile*, is probably Sanscrit, since *nila* in that language signifies *blue* (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 1, p. 58) and the ancients say it had its name from that colour.

But circumstances of much more importance than these discover some early connection between Hindostan and Egypt. The names and figures of the twelve signs of the Zodiac among the Hindoos are nearly the same with ours, which came from Egypt thro' Greece, and each of these signs is divided into thirty degrees (*Sketches relating to the history, &c. of the Hindoos*, p. 312) Both the Egyptians and Hindoos had also the same division of time into *weeks*, and they denominated each of the days by the names of the same planets (*La Croze*, p. 309)

The resemblance between the Oriental and Occidental systems extends much farther than Egypt.



The office and power of the Druids in the northern parts of Europe, did not differ much from those of the Bramins ; and the Etruscans, from whom the Romans derived the greatest part of their learning and religion, had a system which had a near affinity with that of the Persians and Indians, and they wrote alternately to the right hand and the left (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 2, p. 348.)

Several remarkable *general principles* were held alike by the ancient Egyptians and the modern Hindoos. They both believed that the souls of men existed in a prior state, and that they go into other bodies after death. They had the same ideas of the body being a prison to the soul, and imagined that they could purify and exalt the soul by the mortification of the body ; and from the idea of the great superiority of spiritual to corporeal substances, they held all *matter* in great contempt. They also both believed that plants had a principle of animation (*La Croze* p. 232)

Several religious ideas and customs were common to both countries. The Egyptians of Thebais represented the world under the figure of an egg, which came from the mouth of Cneph, (*Ezourvedam*, p. 18) and this we shall shew, resembled the first production according to the Hindoo system. Several of the Egyptian deities were both male and female

female, which corresponds to the figure of the *lingam* with the Hindoos, ib. p. 24. This obscene figure, at least the *phallus*, was much used in the Egyptian worship, and from Egypt it was carried into Greece, where it was used in the mysteries of Bacchus. As the Hindoos worship their god Isuren under this figure, and likewise carry it in procession, the Egyptians and Greeks did the same with the phallus (*La Croze*, p. 227.) Also the lascivious postures of the Egyptian women before their god Apis, were the same with those of the Hindoo women before their idols (*Ezourvedam* p. 33) Lastly, the Hindoos chuse their sacred bulls by the same marks that were used by the Egyptians (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 2, p. 196.)

The account of the flight of the Egyptian gods, as given by the Greeks, and their concealing themselves under the forms of animals, bears some resemblance to the various transformations of Vichnow, of which an account will be given hereafter. The Egyptians worshipped the Nile, as the Hindoos do the Ganges. Some of the Hindoo temples have the same remarkable form, viz. that of a pyramid, or cone. For that the pyramids of Egypt had some religious use can hardly be doubted. All the pagoda's are in that form, or have towers of that form in the buildings which surround them. The temples in Pegu are also of a conical form

(*Modern*

(*Modern Universal History*, vol. 7, p. 58.) Sir William Jones says that the pyramids of Egypt, as well as those lately discovered in Ireland, and probably also the tower of Babel, seem to have been intended for images of Mahadeva, or Siva, (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 1, p. 34.) Lastly, the onion, which was held in veneration by the Egyptians, is not eaten by the Hindoos. (*Sketches relating to the history, &c. of the Hindoos*, vol. 2. p. 6.)

Not only do we find the same general principles, and the same, or similar, religious customs, but some of the same gods among the Hindoos, Egyptians and Greeks. The Egyptian *Cneph* was the Supreme intelligence, which was never lost sight of by the Hindoos. With the Egyptians *Isis* represented not only the moon, but sometimes the powers of nature, which were supposed to have been in a great measure derived from the moon; and in Bengal and Japan also the same is called *Ifari*, or *Isi*, and is described as a goddess with many arms (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 1, p. 232) But according to Sir William Jones, *Iswara* of the Hindoos is the *Osiris* of the Egyptians, ib. p. 49, and Nared, a distinguished son of Brahma, resembles Hermes, or Mercury. A statue of Jupiter had a third eye in its forehead, and Seva has three eyes, ib. p. 42. Diodorus

Diodorus Siculus and Plutarch say that Osiris signifies a person that has *many eyes*, and Isuren is drawn with an additional eye in his forehead, tho' the phallus is his usual form. (*Ezourvedam*, p. 229) Osiris was said to have been killed by Typhon, and Chib cut off the head of Brahma *ib.* p. 23.

Indra of the Hindoos, called also Divefpiter, is Jupiter, or Diespiter; the bull of Iswara is the Apis, or Ap, of Egypt (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 1, p. 50) Cartraya, with six faces and many eyes, was the Egyptian Orus, and the Mars of Italy, *ib.* p. 49. Sri, or Sris, called also Pedma, and Camala, was Ceres, *ib.* p. 30, and according to Herodotus (*Lib. 2, sec. 63*) she was the Egyptian Isis. Ganesa was Janus. (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 1, p. 8.) Visuacarman, the Indian forger of arms for the gods, was Vulcan, *ib.* p. 64. The Rama of India is Dionysos, called also Bromius by the Greeks; Chrishnou, or Vichnou, is Apollo, and in Irish it signifies the sun, *ib.* p. 66. According to the Veda's, and other sacred books, a bad genius, or giant, seizes on the sun and moon when they are eclipsed, and the Egyptians ascribed the same thing to their Typhon, who was said even to have swallowed their god Horus, or the Sun. (*Ezourvedam*, p. 21.)

The Egyptians at certain festivals carried the  
images



images of their gods in procession. Herodotus says they drew one of them on a carriage with four wheels, (*Lib. 2, Sec. 63.*) and the same is now done by the Hindoos. The Egyptians held cows, in much greater veneration than any other animals *ib. sec. 41.* They were sacred to Isis, and never sacrificed. Some superstitious respect was also paid to horned cattle by the ancient Persians. In an account of the Zendavesta, Ormuzd, the Supreme Being, directs Zerdusht to render worship and praise to the *Supreme ox*, and to the *rain*, of which the angel Jashter, who subsists in the form of an ox, is the distributor (*Annual Register for 1762, p. 117.*) The Hindoos make some use of the image of a bull, as Mr. Sonnerat informs us in his account of some of their temples, tho' they do not carry their superstition in this respect so far as the Egyptians, who made live bulls the immediate objects of their worship.

Tho' there may be something of bold conjecture, and consequently of uncertainty, in some of these suppositions, they seem to be pretty well supported by the writers referred to; and it is evident on the whole, that at least a system very similar to that of the present Hindoos must have been of very great antiquity, and prior to the general dispersion of mankind. For tho' similar situations may lead to similar sentiments, and corresponding practices

practices, to men living at a great distance from each other, the above mentioned similarity is too great, and extends to too many particulars, to be accounted for in this way.

It is not at all extraordinary that men who had no communication with each other should be equally worshippers of the sun, moon and stars, that they should fancy deep caverns, or thick woods, to be haunted with spirits, that particular rivers should have their several genii, or deities, dispensing their waters at their pleasure, as the sun, they might suppose, did his heat, and the moon, the stars, and the planets their peculiar influences. But that they should adopt the same rites in the worship of these natural deities, and especially that they should give them *attributes*, and even *names*, so nearly alike, is beyond the effect of accident.

But tho' this consideration proves the great antiquity of the general outline of the Hindoo religion, it is impossible that a system so extensive and complex as this is, and implying such abstruse metaphysics, should have been completed at a very early period. Tho' erroneous, wild, and absurd, in the extreme, as it will soon be seen to be, it must have been the result of much reflection, which necessarily requires leisure; and this must have been subsequent to the rudest ages of mankind. I cannot help concluding, therefore, that independently

dently of any positive evidence, it could not have had its origin long before the time of Moses. There is, consequently, nothing unfair in the comparison that I propose. Whether Moses was acquainted with this system or not, it will appear, contrary to the opinion of Mr. Langles, that he was far from deriving any advantage from it; and there is not in his writings any allusions to *books* pretended to be sacred, as the Veda's, but only to such *practices* as were common to the Hindoos and other heathen nations.

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### SECTION III.

*Of the Veda's, and other sacred Books of the Hindoos.*

THE books called *Veda's*, or the sacred books of the Hindoos, the antiquity of which has been considered, are said to have been originally numerous, but to have been reduced to *four* by Vyasa. (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, Vol. 2, p. 99) In Mr. De la Croze, I find the mention of *five*, p. 291, and in imitation, or abridgment of them, Mr. Langles supposes the five books of Moses to have been written. However in the most ancient writings in which they are quoted, or referred to, especially

especially the Institutes of Menu, a work next in antiquity and authority to the Veda's themselves, no mention is made of more than three, *ib.* vol. 2, p. 106. The fourth Sir William Jones says is a later composition, as he says is evident from the language in which it is written, which is comparatively modern, and therefore easily understood; whereas there are but few Bramins who can read the three first, *ib.* vol. 1, p. 107. They are now very scarce, but there are comments upon them written in a very early period (*Code of Gentoo Laws, Preface, p. 22.*)

These Veda's are said by the Hindoos to have been dictated by the Supreme Being, or at least by Brahma, the creative power, to the first man. Menu, who is the speaker in the Institutes, says, what however I do not pretend to explain, "From fire, from the air, and from the sun, he (*viz.* Brahma) milked out the three primordial Veda's, named *Rich, Yayuch* and *Saman*, for the due performance of sacrifice. He gave being to time, and the divisions of time, to the stars also, and to the planets, to rivers, oceans, and mountains," &c. p. 4.

From the French translator of Ezourvedam, I collect the following account of the composition of the Veda's. The son of Brahma, he says, p. 113, retiring to a desert, composed the Vedam in four books each being transcribed by a different person; but the last was written in a dialect different from



the three first. Afterwards, he says, Vyassa added a fifth book, the four first being forbidden to the Choutres, p. 121.

In whatever manner these books were composed, nothing can exceed the encomiums which the Hindoos make of them. In the Institutes of Menu it is said, p. 357. "To patriarchs, to deities, and to mankind, the scripture is an eye giving constant light; nor could the Veda sastra have been made by human faculties, nor can it be measured by human reason." We shall soon, however, I hope, have an opportunity of judging for ourselves. In the mean time, I shall give my readers a specimen of the fourth Veda, as translated by Sir William Jones (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 2, p. 108.)

"Where they who know the great one go, thro' holy rites, and thro' piety, thither may fire raise me. May fire receive my sacrifices. Mysterious praise to fire. May air waft me thither. May air increase my spirits. Mysterious praise to air. May the sun draw me thither. May the sun enlighten my eye. Mysterious praise to the sun. May the moon bear me thither. May the moon receive my mind. Mysterious praise to the moon. May the plant Soma lead me thither, may Soma bestow on me its hallowed milk: Mysterious praise to Soma. May Indra carry me thither. May Indra  
give

give me strength. Myſterious praiſe to Indra. May water lead me thither. May water bring me the ſtream of immortality. Myſterious praiſe to the waters. Where they who know the great one go, thro' holy rites, and thro' piety, thither may Brahma conduct me. May Brahma lead me to the great one. Myſterious praiſe to Brahma."

Whither this paſſage be peruſed with admiration, and be deemed ſublime, as it may be by ſome, or be thought extravagant and ridiculous, as it will by others, it will not be eaſy to find a paſſage reſembling it in any of the five books of Moſes. Mr. Langles will probably look for its counterpart in the book of *Numbers*, which is the fourth of the Pentatuch, as this is from the fourth of the Veda's.

As Mr. Dow's account of the Veda's is conſiderably different from that of other writers, I ſhall give it unmixed with any other, from the *Preliminary diſſertation* prefixed to his *History of Hindoſtan*.

"The Hindoos are divided into two religious ſects, the followers of the doctrine of the *Bedang*, and thoſe who adhere to the principles of *Neadirſen*, and the firſt are eſteemed the moſt orthodox and the moſt holy. *Bedang*, a title of the *Shafter*, or commentary on the *Beda's*, is compounded of *Bed*, *ſcience* and *ang*, *body*. The name of this ſhafter, therefore, may be literally tranſlated the *body*

*dy of science.* Almost all the Hindoos of the Decan, and those of the Malabar and Coromandel coasts, are of the sect of the Bedang."

"The four first Beda's contain a hundred thousand *ashlogues*, or stanza's, in verse, each of which consists of four lines. The first is called *Rug Beda*, which signifies the science of divination, concerning which it principally treats. It also contains astrology, astronomy, natural philosophy, and a particular account of the creation of matter, and the formation of the world."

"The second Beda is distinguished by the name of *Sheham*, which signifies piety, or devotion, and accordingly treats of all religious and moral duties. It also contains many hymns in praise of the Supreme Being, as well as verses in honour of subaltern intelligences."

The third is the *Judger Beda*, which, as the word implies, comprehends the whole science of religious rites, and ceremonies, such as fasts, festivals, purifications, penances, pilgrimages, sacrifices, prayers, and offerings."

"They give the appellation of *Obatar Bah Beda* to the fourth. *Obatar* signifies in the Sanscrita, *the being*, or the *essence*, and *bah*, *good*; so that *Obatar bah* is literally the *knowledge of the good beings*; and accordingly this book comprehends the whole science of theology, and mystical theology."

"The

"The language of the Obatar Bah Beda is now become obsolete, so that very few Bramins pretend to read it with propriety. Whether this proceeds from its great antiquity, or from its being written in an uncommon dialect of the Shanscrita, is hard to determine. We are inclined to believe the first is the truth, for we can by no means agree with a late ingenious writer (Mr. Holwell) who affirms that the Obatar Bah Beda was written in a period posterior to the rest of the Beda's." Since, however, Sir William Jones asserts this, there will be no doubt but that Mr. Dow is in an error in this respect.

"*Neadirsen* is a compound of *nea*, signifying *sight*, and *dirsen* to *teach*, or *explain*; so that the word may be translated *an exhibition of truth*. Tho' it is not reckoned so ancient as the *Bedang*, it is said to be written by a philosopher called *Goutam*, near four thousand years ago. The philosophy contained in this Shaster is very abstruse and metaphysical. The generality of the Hindoos of Bengal, and all the northern provinces of Hindostan, esteem the *Neadirsen* a sacred Shaster; but those of the Decan, Coromandel, and Malabar, totally reject it. It consists of seven volumes," the first of which Mr. Dow procured, and lodged in the British museum.

"The author of *Neadirsen* maintains that the  
vital



vital soul is different from the great soul; and on this head the followers of the Bedang and Neadirsen principally differ." The meaning probably is, that the principle of intelligence which animates the inferior beings, was not an emanation from the Supreme Mind, and is not to be absorbed into it again, which the other Hindoos maintain.

Besides the four Veda's, of which we have not as yet any translation into an European language, there are other Hindoo books which are allowed to contain a faithful account of their doctrines, and some of these we have in French or English. There are more particularly *eighteen*, which bear the title of *Puranams*, ascribed, says, Sir William Jones to Vyasa whose philosophy is compared to that of Plato (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 1, p. 115) Of these the *Bagavadam* is one. This work according to the translator of *Ezourvedam*, contains some excellent moral precepts; but he says they cannot compensate for an immense number of extravagant absurdities, and fabulous histories which fatigue the imagination, and excite nausea p. 130. These *Puranams* must be the same with the *Auchtorrah Bhade* of Mr. Holwell, and the *Neadirsen* of Mr. Dow.

We have a *Code of Gentoo laws* compiled by Hindoo pundits, or learned Bramins, with a large Preface, containing an account of the creation, and  
other

other general principles of their faith. Of this work I shall make great use. But a work of more importance to my purpose is entitled *Institutes of Hindoo laws, or the Ordinances of Menu, comprizing the Indian system of duties, religious, and civil, verbally translated from the original Sanscrit by Sir William Jones.*

These ordinances announce their being delivered by Bhrigu, the son of Menu, when the sages of India applied to him for instruction. An idea of the authority of this work may be conceived from the introduction to it, in which Menu himself is represented as saying concerning Brahma, "He having enacted this code of laws himself, taught it fully to me in the beginning. Afterwards I taught it *Marishi*, and the nine other holy sages. This my son Bhrigu will repeat the divine code to you, without omission," p. 8. After this we read, "Bhrigu, the great and wonderful, having thus been appointed by Menu to promulgate his laws, addressed all the Richi's with an affectionate mind saying, Hear."

The work concludes as follows. "Thus did the allwise Menu, who possesses extensive dominion, and blazes with heavenly splendour, disclose to me, from his benevolence to mankind, this transcendant system of laws, which must be kept devoutly concealed," p. 361. It will be seen that the Bramins  
alone

alone have the custody of the Hindoo laws, and they were not to communicate them to all the people promiscuously. Tho' therefore, we are not in possession of the Veda's, we may safely rely on the testimony of the Hindoo Bramins, thus solemnly given, for the most important of their doctrines.

There is another work on the Hindoo theology entitled *Ezourvedam*, which I shall sometimes quote, tho' Mr. Sonnerat says (*Voyages*, vol. 1. p. 215) that its importance has been greatly magnified by Voltaire and others, when it is in fact the composition of some Christian missionary; and from the perusal of it, this will hardly be questioned. The writer, however, from his long residence in Hindostan, was probably well acquainted with the Hindoo system.

## SECTION

SECTION IV.

*Of the Agreement of the Hindoo Principles and Traditions, and those of other ancient Nations, with the Writings of Moses.*

**B**EFORE I point out the difference between the institutions of the Hindoos, &c. and those of Moses, I shall mention some remarkable particulars in which they agree. And as the writings and traditions of the Hindoos are unquestionably very ancient, they may be justly considered as testimonies in favour of the truth of the Mosaic history.

La Croze justly observes that the Hindoos have preserved the knowledge of the Supreme Being, when the Greeks, and other more polished nations in the western parts of the world, had lost sight of him, vol. 2, p. 2, their attention being engrossed by inferior objects of worship. Some of their descriptions of the Supreme Being are just, and truly sublime. In the Institutes of Menu he is said, p. 201, to be "one whom the mind alone can comprehend, whose essence eludes the external organs, who has no visible parts, who exists from eternity, the

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soul



soul of all beings, whom no being can comprehend." They also say, according to the translator of the *Ezourvedam*, p. 201, that "goodness is the very essence of God."

The religion of the northern European nations was in several respects similar to that of the Hindoos, and of other Eastern nations; and in the Islandic mythology God is said to be the author of every thing that exists, the "eternal, the living and awful Being, who searches into concealed things; the Being that never changes," and these people held in contempt the polytheism of those who treated them as barbarians. (*Northern Antiquities*, vol. 1, p. 78, 84.) It is probable that it was not till the arrival of Odin, or his disciples, that the religion of the ancient Danes and Scandinavians began to lose its original purity. In that part of the world many persons after this time continued to despise the vulgar polytheism, and adhered to their ancient worship, *ib.* p. 154.

If the representations of Mr. Holwell may be depended upon, the most raised ideas of the Hindoos concerning the Supreme Being fall far short of those that were entertained by the Hebrews. He says (*Interesting Historical Events*, vol. 2, p. 46,) "the Shaftah begins with denying the prescience of God with respect to the actions of free agents;" whereas according to the writings of Moses, many things

things are foreseen, and distinctly foretold, by God, which depend on the voluntary actions of men, and even in distant ages. Also the long contest, the following account of which Mr. Howell says he copied from the Shaftah, of the Supreme Being with two opposing powers, does not agree with the omnipotence which the Hebrew scriptures uniformly ascribe to him. "When the eternal one began his intended new creation of the *Dunneahoudah*, he was opposed by two mighty Offsoors, which proceeded from the wax of Brumma's ear, and their names were Modoo and Kytoo. And the eternal one contended and fought with Modoo and Kytoo five thousand years, and he smote them on the thigh, and they were lost, and assimilated with Murto," vol. 2, p. 106.

There was something similar to this in the Persian system, according to the extracts from the Zenda-vesta. "Ahriman interrupted the order of the universe, raised an army against Ormusd; and having maintained a fight against him during ninety days, was at length vanquished by Honover, the divine word," (*Annual Register*, 1762, p. 126.)

In the Hindoo system the first production of the Supreme Being was something similar to the chaos of Moses, an earth covered with water, and what is more particular, they speak of the *Spirit of God* as moving upon it. "The waters," says

Menu,

Menu, "are called *Nāra*, because they were the production of *Nara*, or the spirit of God; and since they were his first *Ayana*, or place of motion, he likewise is named *Narayana*, or moving on the waters," p. 2.

One of the Hindoo fables, related by father Bouchet, bears some resemblance to the Mosaic history of paradise. "The inferior gods, who have ever since the creation been multiplying themselves almost to infinity, did not at first enjoy the privilege of immortality. After numberless endeavours to procure it, they had recourse to a tree, the leaf of which grew in Chorcan, or paradise, and met with success, so that by eating from time to time of the fruit of this tree, they obtained this advantage. At length a serpent, called *Chien*, perceived that the tree of life had been found out, and probably having been appointed to guard it, was so exasperated at being overreached, that he poured out a great quantity of poison. The whole earth felt the dreadful effects of it, and not one mortal would have escaped, had not the god *Chiven*, taking pity on the human race, revealed himself under the shape of a man, and swallowed the poison." (*Ceremonies of Religion*, p. 38.)

According to Tavernier, the Hindoos say that the first man was called *Adam*, and the first woman *Manan-iva*. (*Voyages*, vol. 2, p. 421. 461.) And  
according

according to Mr. Lord, the Parfis have preserved an account of the creation corresponding to that of Moses in more particulars. For they say that the Supreme Being divided the work of creation into six parts; that he created man and woman on the sixth day; that for their use all other creatures were made; that the man was called *Adamah*, and the woman *Evah*. (*Religion des Banians*, p. 143. 146) They also, he says, observe six festivals in commemoration of the six days of creation. *ib.* 192. Niebuhr says that the festivals of this people continue five days in commemoration of some parts of the creation (*Voyages*, vol. 2, p. 163.)

The evil Being Ahriman, they farther say, got upon the earth in the form of a serpent, and seduced the first human pair from their allegiance to Ormusd, by persuading them that he himself was the author of all that existed. The man and the woman both believing him became criminal, and thus sin will perpetuate itself till the resurrection. (*Extracts from the Zendavesta, Annual Register, for 1762*, p. 127.)

I have already observed that the Hindoos divide time into periods of seven days, and that they are named after the same planets in the Sanscrit, that they are by the Greeks and Romans. (*Gentoo Laws, preface*, p. 40.) On the coast of Malabar several acts of worship are performed on Fridays (*Phillips account*



*account of Malabar*, p. 60.) The people of Siam, the Jesuits say, make a kind of Sunday every seventh day, spending it in prayer and fasting. They also give the same names to the different days of the week that are given to them in Hindostan (*Jesuits account*, p. 306. 284)

In agreement, at least in part, with the account of Moses, the Hindoos say that in the first ages of the world men were greatly superior to the present race both in the length of their lives, and in the powers of body and mind; but that, in consequence of vice, they gradually declined, (*Sketches relating to the history, &c. of the Hindoos*, vol. 1, p. 296.)

The Hindoos have preserved an unequivocal tradition of an *universal deluge*. "The first Indian history," says Sir William Jones, "is an account of an universal deluge, dressed in allegory, (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 1, p. 20) and the three first *avatars*, or descents of Vichnou, relate clearly to the same event, in which eight persons only were saved," *ib.* p. 169.

The following curious account of this deluge is given by Father Bouchet in his letter from Indostan. "The god Routren, who is the grand destroyer of all created beings, resolved one day to destroy all mankind, pretending that he had  
just

just reasons for being dissatisfied with their behaviour. This design was not kept so secret, but it was found out by Vichnou, the preserver of all creatures; who discovered the very day on which the flood was to take place. Tho' his power did not extend so far as to suspend the execution of what the god Routren had resolved upon, yet, as he was the preserver of all created beings, he had a right to prevent if possible, the pernicious effects of it, and he took the following method for that purpose."

"He appeared one day to Sattiavarti, his great confident, and privately assured him, that an universal flood would soon happen; that the whole earth would be covered with water, and that the design of Routren was nothing less than the destruction of all mankind, and of every animal. He nevertheless assured him that he himself did not need to be under any apprehension; for that in spite of Routren, he would find an opportunity to preserve him, and that he would take such measures as that the world should afterwards be re-peopled. His design was to make a wonderful bark rise up of a sudden, at a time when Routren should least suspect any such thing, and to store it with a large provision of souls, and seeds of beings, eight hundred and forty millions at least. As for Sattiavarti, he was at the time of the flood to be on  
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a very high mountain, which he pointed out to him very exactly."

"Some time after this, Sattiavarti, as had been foretold him, perceived a multitude of clouds drawing together, but beheld with unconcern the storm which was gathering over the heads of the guilty; when the most dreadful rain that had ever been seen poured down from the skies, the rivers swelled, and spread themselves with rapidity over the surface of the whole earth; the sea broke its appointed bounds, and mixing with the rivers, which now had left their channels, soon covered the highest mountains. Trees, animals, men, cities, and kingdoms were all drowned; in a word all animated beings were instantly destroyed."

"In the mean time Sattiavarti, with some of his penitents, had withdrawn to the appointed mountain, where he waited for the succour which the god had promised him. However this did not prevent his being seized with some short intervals of terror; as the water gathered strength continually, and each moment drew nearer to his asylum. But that very instant, which he thought would have been his last, he saw the bark that was to save him, and immediately got into it with all the devotees in his company, and also the eight hundred and forty millions of souls, and seeds of all beings."

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"The difficulty now was to steer the bark, and preserve it from the impetuosity of the waves, which raged with prodigious violence. But Vichnou took care of this. For immediately assuming the form of a fish, he steered the vessel with his tail, as though it had been a rudder. This god who, was now both fish and pilot, performed his part so well, that Sattiavarti waited very quietly in his asylum till such time as the waters were run off from the surface of the earth." (*Religious Ceremonies*, p. 388)

The translator of the Ezourvedam says, vol. 2, p. 206, that according to the Puranams, eight persons escaped the general deluge. The Chinese too, says Sir William Jones, (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 1, p. 226) like the Hindoos, believe the earth to have been wholly covered with water, which they describe as flowing abundantly, and then subsiding, and dividing the higher from the lower ages of mankind; that the division of time from which their poetical history begins, preceded the appearance of Fohi on the mountain of Chini. A learned follower of Zaratusht informed him that in a book which the Behdins hold sacred, mention is made of an universal inundation, there called *the deluge of time*. ib vol. 1, p. 29. And according to Mr. Lord, the Parsis say that by the temptation of Lucifer men became wicked, and God destroy-



ed them with a deluge, except a few, from whom the world was peopled anew; that the first of the first race of kings was *Guiomaras*, the son of *Aram*, the son of *Sem* the son of *Noah*, whom they call *Adam Affani*, or the *second Adam*, p. 148. By the Hindoos *Noah* is called *Vaivaswata*, the child of the fun, as well as *Satiavrattra*, and by the Arabs he is called *Nuh*, ib. vol. 1, p. 14. 28.

A curious account of the intoxication of *Noah*, and of the behaviour of his three sons on the occasion, is given us from the Hindoo writings in the third volume of *Asiatic Researches*, which tho' I quoted in a former work, I shall not omit here, being so much to my present purpose.

"To *Satyavarman*, the sovereign of the whole earth, were born three sons, the eldest *Sherma*, then *Charma*, and the third *Jyapeti*. They were all men of good morals, excellent in virtue, and virtuous deeds; skilled in the use of weapons, to strike with or to be thrown, brave men, eager for victory in battle. But *Satyavarman* being continually delighted with devout meditation, and seeing his sons fit for dominion, laid upon them the burden of government."

"Whilst he remained honouring and satisfying the gods, and priests, and kine, one day, by the act of destiny, the king having drunk mead, became senseless, and lay asleep naked. There was  
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he seen by Charma, and by him were his two brothers called, to whom he said, What now has befallen ? In what state is this our fire ? By these two was he hidden with clothes, and called to his senses again and again."

" Having recovered his intellect, and perfectly knowing what had passed, he cursed Charma ; saying. Thou shalt be the servant of servants. And since thou madest a laughter in their presence, from laughter shalt thou acquire a name. Then he gave to Sherma the whole domain of the South of the snowy mountain, and to Jyapeti he gave all to the North of the snowy mountain ; but he, by the power of religious contemplation, attained supreme bliss."

The fourth and fifth avatar of the Hindoos, Sir William Jones says (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 1, p. 110) relate to the punishment of impiety, and the humiliation of the proud ; and refer, as he thinks, to the dispersion from Babel ; and thence he infers that their second, or silver age was subsequent to that event. Farther than this, the translator of Ezourvedam says that, in the Bagavadam, there are, besides the Mosaic account of the deluge, the principal circumstances of the history of Ishmael, and the sacrifice of Isaac. p. 84.

There are, indeed, several things in the Hindoo traditions which greatly resemble some in the histo-

ry of Abraham. Raja Tara, who is placed in the first age of Cal Jug, they say had a son who apostatized from the Hindoo faith, for which he was banished by his father to the West. The apostate fixed his residence in a country called Mahgod, and propagated the Jewish religion, which the impostor Mahomet farther corrupted. (*Dow's History of Hindostan, Preface, p. 5.*)

Brahma, the Hindoo lawgiver, very much resembles Abraham; and his wife Saravadi, Sarah, the termination vadi signifying lady (*Bouchet's Letter in Religious Ceremonies, p. 81.*) The Hindoos also relate of one of their penitents, that God required of him the sacrifice of his son, but was contented with his obedience, and would not suffer him to put his son to death. Some, however, say that he was sacrificed, but that God afterwards raised him from the dead, *ib. p. 381.*

There is something that very much resembles the history of Moses in that of one of the relations of Christen, and of Christen himself, *ib.* And in the following history, related by the same Father Bouchet, there is a striking resemblance to that of Job; and it certainly furnishes an argument for the very great antiquity of the history."

"The gods met one day in their Chorcan, or paradise of delights. Devendiren, the god of glory, presided in this illustrious assembly, which was  
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crowded with gods and goddesses. The most famous penitents had also a place in it, particularly the seven chief anchorets. After some indifferent discourse, the following question was proposed, viz. whether it was possible to find a faultless prince among mankind. They almost all asserted that there was not one but was subject to great vices; and the partisans of this opinion were headed by Vichouva Moutren. But the famous Vachichten opposed him, maintaining that king Achandiren, his disciple, had no fault. On this Vichouva Moutren, who is of so imperious a temper that he cannot bear any contradiction, fell into a great passion, and assured the gods he would soon shew them the defects of this prince, if they would give him up to him. Vachichten accepted the challenge, when it was stipulated that he whose assertion should prove false should give up to the other all the merit he had acquired by a long series of penance. And now king Achandiren became the victim of this dispute. Vichouva Moutren put him to every kind of trial, reducing him to extreme poverty, dispossessing him of his kingdom, taking the life of his only son, and carrying off his wife Chandavandi."

Notwithstanding all these misfortunes, the prince continued so steadfast in the practice of all the virtues, that the gods themselves, who put him to all these



these trials, would infallibly have sunk under them; and they rewarded him with uncommon liberality. They embraced him one after another, and even the goddesses made him their compliments. They restored his wife to him, and raised up his son; after which Vichouva Moutren, pursuant to the agreement, resigned all the merit he had acquired to Vachichten, who made a present of it to Achan-diren; and the vanquished Vichouva Moutren went away with great regret, to begin again a long series of penance, in order, if possible, to acquire a stock of fresh merit." (*Religious Ceremonies*, p. 383.)

In the Hindoo code we find some of the more extraordinary laws and customs of the Hebrew nation, such as were never received in the western part of the world; as that of a man taking the widow of his brother, in order to keep up his family. "On the failure of issue by the husband," say the *Institutes of Menu*, "if he be of the servile class, the desired offspring may be procured, either by his brother, or some other Sapinda, on the wife who has been duly authorized. Sprinkled with clarified butter, silent, in the night, let the kinsman then beget only one son, but a second by no means, on the widow or childless wife," p. 253. But the condition on which the legitimacy of this child depended must have been difficult to ascertain. For it is added, "Should a wife, even legally authorized

zed produce a son by a brother, or any other Sapinda of her husband, that son, if begotten with impure desire, the sages proclaim to be base born, and incapable of inheritance," p. 264.

Polygamy is allowed to the Hindoos, as it was to the Hebrews. The following law relates to this case. "If after one damsel has been chosen, another be offered to the bridegroom, who had purchased leave to marry her from her next kinsman, he may become the husband of both for the same price. This law Menu ordained." p. 216, Here too we see that, like the Hebrews, the husband purchased his wife, instead of receiving a fortune with her.

In the Hebrew ritual a goat was turned loose into the wilderness after the high priest had confessed on his head the sins of the nation on the annual day of expiation, and Mr. Maurice says (*Indian Antiquities*, vol. 3, p. 173) that the hindoos let loose a horse for the same purpose.

Lastly, I would observe in this place, that notwithstanding the unreasonable stress that we shall find the Hindoos lay on mere external observances of various kinds, so that they must necessarily confine, and wholly engross, the attention of the common people, there are not wanting in their writings, some excellent moral maxims, similar to many in the books of the Old Testament, which represent

represent every thing of this kind as insignificant without moral virtue. The following are particularly worthy of notice. "To a man contaminated by sensuality neither the Veda's, nor liberality, nor sacrifices, nor strict observances, nor pious austerities, will procure felicity," (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 29) "A wise man must constantly discharge all moral duties tho' he performs not constantly the ceremonies of religion; since he falls low if, while he performs the ceremonial acts only, he discharge not his moral duties." *ib.* p. 115.

A peculiar stress, even too great, is laid on the duties to parents. "By honouring his father, mother and sister, a man effectually does whatever ought to be done. This is the highest duty, and every other act is a subordinate duty. All duties are completely performed by that man by whom those three are completely honoured; but to him by whom they are dishonoured, all other acts of duty are fruitless," *ib.* p. 47.

## SECTION

SECTION V.

*Of the Creation, and the general Principles of the Hindoo Philosophy.*

I SHALL begin my detail of the religious principles of the Hindoos with their account of the creation, and the origin of things, which is so very different from that of Moses, that he cannot, I think, in this be thought to have been copied from them. Mr. Langles says (*Discours*, p. 7) of the authors of the Hindoo system, that "they were venerable institutors, who gave the people precepts of the soundest morality, and metaphysics truly sublime, concealed under the veil of allegory, the sense of which the bulk of the people could not penetrate." We shall now see how far this encomium is just.

There is a considerable difference of opinion among the Hindoos themselves on the subject of creation; nor can we think this at all extraordinary, when we consider how much there is of mere imagination, and how little of rational evidence in their doctrine. In the following general outline, however, they seem to be all agreed.

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They say that, after the Supreme Being had existed alone from all eternity, he resolved to produce other beings. But this production was wholly *from his own substance*; and after a certain period they believe that every thing will be absorbed into him again, when he will exist alone as before. There will, however, be a succession of these creations and absorptions without end. At what time the first creation took place they do not say; but according to them every thing that now exists has existed before, and will hereafter exist again.

The production of all things from the substance of the Divine Being is thus represented by some of the Bramins. Comparing the first cause to a spider, they say the universe was produced by that insect spinning out of its own entrails and belly; so that it brought forth first the elements, and then the celestial globes, &c. and that things are to continue in this state till the end of ages, when this spider will draw into its body the several threads which had issued from it, when all things will be destroyed, and the world no longer exist, but as in the belly of the spider. (*Religious Ceremonies*, p. 384.)

This scheme may, no doubt, be called sublime, as is every thing that requires a great stretch of imagination, but what else it has to recommend it I do not see. It is evident, however, that these principles,

principles, or similar ones, found their way into Greece, and formed the outline of several of their systems of philosophy. Plutarch in his treatise on the cessation of the Grecian oracles says "Among the great number of gods there is but one that is eternal and immortal. All the rest, having been produced in time, will end in the death." And the account which he gives of the extraordinary report of the death of the god Pan was received without any mark of surprize. Seneca the tragedian says "*Omnes pariter deos perdet mors aliqua.*" (*Hercules Octius.*) The Scandinavians also supposed their gods to die, and never to come to life again, (*Northern Antiquities*, vol. 1, p. 115.)

We learn from Plutarch that the Persian Magi held a system similar to this. Theopompus says that, according to the Magi, each of the gods subdues and is subdued by turns, for the space of three thousand years apiece, and that for three thousand years more they fight and destroy each others works; but that at last Pluto will fail, and mankind be happy, and neither need food nor have a shadow; that the god who projects these things does for some time take his repose, and rest, but that this time is not so much to him, altho' it seems so to men whose sleep is short, *De Iside et Osiride.*

A system coming within the same general outline,

outline, strange as it seems to us at this day, was also the philosophy that was maintained by believers in christianity from the time of Avicenna. For he held that there was but one soul in the whole universe, and that after death all separate consciousnesses will cease. And a system very like this, according to Sir William Jones, still prevails in the East, and independently of the rest of the Hindoo principles.

"A metaphysical theology, he says (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 1, p. 204) was professed immemorially by a numerous sect of Persians and Hindoos, and was carried in part into Greece, and prevails even now among the learned Musselmén. The modern philosophers of this persuasion are called *Sufis*. Their fundamental tenets are, that nothing exists absolutely but God; that the human soul is an emanation from his essence, and tho' divided for a time from its heavenly source, will be finally reunited to it; that the highest possible happiness will arise from this union, that the chief good of mankind in this world consists in as perfect an union with the eternal spirit as the incumbrance of the mortal frame will allow; and that for this purpose he should break all connection with external objects, and pass thro' life without attachments. Such," says he, "is the religion of the modern Persian poets, the Vedan-

si-philosophers, and the best Lyric poets of India; and as it was a system of the highest antiquity in both nations, it may be added to the many proofs of an immemorial affinity between them." &c. &c.

In the Institutes of Menu we have the following account of the origin of things. Having described the Supreme being as was represented before, viz. as "him whom essence eludes the external organs, who existed from eternity, whom no being can comprehend" &c. Menu says, that "having willed to produce various beings from his own divine essence, he first, with a thought created the waters, and placed in them a productive seed. This seed became an egg, bright as gold, and in this egg he was born himself in the form of *Brahma*, the great father of all spirits. In this egg the great power sat inactive a whole year, at the close of which he caused the egg to divide itself, and from its two divisions he framed the heavens above, and the earth beneath. In the midst he placed the subtle ether, the eight regions, and the permanent receptacle of waters. From the supreme soul he drew forth mind, existing substantially, tho' unperceived by sense, immaterial." p. 12, &c.

Thus we see both matter and spirit derived from the same source, viz. the divine essence. Agreeably to this, La Croze, in his account of the system says, p. 275, "The Supreme Being having determined



determined to create matter, was obliged to give himself a material form, since a pure spirit cannot act upon corporeal substance."

The pundits who compiled the Code of Gentoo laws do not, in their account of the creation, say that Birmha was the Supreme Being himself; but, as may be inferred from their language, a being as distinct from himself as the earth and the heavens, which they say were produced before him. "The principle of truth" meaning, no doubt, the Supreme Being, they say, "having first formed the earth, and the heavens, and the waters, and fire, and air, produced a being called *Burmha*, a dewtah, or object of worship, for the creation of all beings, p. 99.

But according to the Institutes of Menu, tho' this Birmha was the immediate author of four different races of men, or casts, of which an account will be given hereafter, he produced another person called *Menu*, who is represented as having dictated these Institutes, for the production of other beings. "Having" he says, p. 6, "divided his own substance, the mighty power became half male and half female, and from that female he produced *Kiraj*. Know me to be that person whom the male *Viraj* produced by himself, me the framer of all this visible world. It was I who, desirous of giving birth to a race of men, first produced ten lords of

of created being, eminent in holiness, *Marishi*, *Atri*, *Angiras*, *Palastya*, *Pulaha*, *Cratu*, *Prachitas*, or *Darcha*, *Vasishtha*, *Bhrigu*, and *Narada*. They, abundant in glory, produced seven other Menu's, together with deities, and the mansions of deities, and *Maharshi*, or great sages, unlimited in power, benevolent genii, and fierce giants, blood thirsty savages, heavenly quiriters, nymphs, and demons, huge serpents, and snakes of smaller size, birds of mighty wing, and separate companies of *Pitris*, or progenitors of mankind, lightnings and thunderbolts, clouds and coloured bows of *Indra*, falling meteors, earth rending vapours, comets and luminaries of various degrees, horsefaced sylvans, apes, fish, and a variety of birds, tame cattle, deer, men, and ravenous beasts, with two rows of teeth, small and large reptiles, moths, lice, fleas, and common flies, with every biting gnat, and immoveable substances of distinct sorts. Thus was this whole assemblage of stationary and moveable bodies framed by those high minded beings, thro' the force of their own devotion, and at my command with separate actions allotted to each." p. 6.

According to other accounts, the Supreme Being reproduced himself, not in one form only, viz. that of *Birmha*, but in three, viz. *Birmha*, with a power of creating, *Vichnou*, with that of preserving, and *Sieb* that of destroying, the last being sometimes called

called *Ifuren* and also *Ruddery* (*Lord*, p. 50). All the three are by the Malabarians called *Dirumantigoi*. (*Phillip's account of Malabar*, p. 4.)

Vichnou, the second person in this Hindoo trinity, is said to have undergone nine successive incarnations, to deliver mankind from so many perilous situations. The first they say was in the form of a lion, the second of a hog, the third a tortoise, the fourth a serpent, the fifth that of Bramin, (a dwarf, a foot and a half high) the sixth a monster, viz. half man and half lion, the seventh a dragon, the eighth a man born of a virgin, and the ninth an ape. Bernier adds a tenth, which is to be that of a great cavalier, (*Voyage*, vol. 2, p. 142). A very particular and a very different account of these transformations is given by Mr. Sonnerat (*Voyages*, vol. 1, p. 158, &c.) with curious representations of each of them.

Mr. Holwell's account, which he says he found in the Shastah, is very different from that given above, and is as follows: "The eternal one formed other beings in part of his own essence" (but he mentions no other source of being) "first *Birmah*, *Bisnoo*, and *Sieb*. To *Birmah* he assigned the power of government and glory, to *Bisnoo* works of tenderness and benevolence, to *Sieb* works of terror, severity and destruction. He then formed *Moisasear*, and the *Debtah logue*, or the angelic host,

host, subjecting them to Birmah, whom he also constituted his vicegerent in heaven, and Bishnoo and Sieb his coadjutors."

"After this, part of the angelic host rebelled, and were driven from the face of God; but, at the intercession of the remaining faithful bands, he softened the rigour of his sentence, and instituted a course of purgation. This being intimated to them by Birmah, they received it with gratitude, except the leaders, who in time regained their influence over the rest, and confirmed them in their delinquency: At last *Bouannee Drugah*, one of the Hindoo deities, is to descend on the earth, and to destroy Moisafoor and his adherents. These fallen spirits are those that now animate the bodies of men, animals, and vegetables" (*Interesting Historical Events*, vol. 2, p. 8, 10, 35, 192.)

According to Mr. Dow, the author of the *Bedang* maintains that the world was created by God out of nothing, and that it will again be annihilated, p. 53. But both these accounts differ so much from those contained in the writings of the Hindoos, that have lately been translated, all of which represent the creation as an emanation from the substance of the deity, that I am not disposed to pay much regard to them. The account of the fallen angels is peculiar to Mr. Holwell. Other



accounts of the creation may be seen in Mr. Sonnerat, vol. 1, p. 281.

From the idea of the necessity of the mutual action of the male and female principles to the production of all beings, the Hindoos, like the Egyptians, were led to form a very indecent representation of the creative power, who as La Croze says, p. 275, "containing within himself; all the principles of the creatures, and the reality of the two sexes, separated them within himself, and therefore under this figure, called *lingam*, representing the male and female organs, they denote the creator; and their most solemn worship is presented to him under this form." It is remarkable, however, that it is the third person in their trinity, or the destructive and not the generative power, that is particularly worshipped under this form.

Since it will not be denied in this part of the world, that the whole of this system, the particulars of which I have only begun to develope, was the mere creature of imagination, there would surely have been more wisdom in saying less on a subject concerning which nothing can be known. And supposing Moses to have written without any inspiration, his system has this to recommend it, that, besides being very concise, it is not, like this, built on arbitrary and fanciful suppositions. It represents the Supreme Being producing all things not  
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from his own substance, but from nothing, with as much ease as if it had been effected by a mere word of command; and this exertion of power was immediately from himself, without the previous substitution of any other Beings, or dividing himself into three, or any number of parts, for the purpose of creating or governing the world, and superintending all the changes that take place in it. If, as Mr. Langles says, there be *sublimity* in the Hindoo system, there must be more of it in that of Moses, because it is equally great in the effect, and far more simple in the cause, and the operation. It exhibits one great object of our regard, and not a multiplicity of them, in which the idea of the sublime is lost by the division. They who suppose it necessary, or convenient, for the Supreme Being to employ inferior agents in the works of creation and providence must have a less exalted idea of him than they who believe that, without any thing like fatigue, or occasion for repose, he himself originally formed, and constantly conducts, the whole.

The Hindoos, however, conceive that there is more of dignity in the Supreme Being doing nothing himself, but rather employing inferior agents. The bramins of Malabar told Mr. Lord, that it did not become the majesty of God to demean himself so much as to make the creatures, when

when he could do it by his ministers, p. 49. But if a great prince could with perfect ease, and without the least fatigue, do all the business of a great empire himself, it would certainly give us a higher idea of his power and capacity; and if the work had great utility for its object, that conduct would not suggest the idea of meanness, but of the greatest benevolence. They are little minds who reason like these bramins.

In the Institutes of Menu, we have the following sublime idea (if such language must be applied to extreme absurdity) of the successive revolutions in the system of things. "He whose power is incomprehensible, having thus created both me, and this universe, was again absorbed in the Supreme spirit, changing the time of energy for a time of repose. When that power awakes, then has this world its full expansion; but when he slumbers with a tranquil spirit, then the whole system fades away. For when he reposes in a calm sleep embodied spirits, endued with principles of action, depart from their several acts, and the mind itself becomes inert; and when they are once absorbed in that supreme essence, then the divine soul of all beings withdraws its energy, and placidly slumbers. Thus that immutable power, by waking and reposing alternately, revivifies and destroys in eternal succession, this whole assemblage of locomotive and immoveable creatures," p. 7, 8.

That

That we may form some idea of the time that intervenes between these alternate creations and dissolutions of all things, we have, from the same authority, an account of the division of time as it respects different orders of beings. "A month of mortals is a day and a night of the *Pitris*, or patriarchs inhabiting the moon. A year of mortals is a day and a night of the gods, or regents of the universe round the north pole. Twelve thousand divine years is called the age of the gods, and a thousand such years is a day of *Brahma*. His night has equal duration. At the close of his night, having long reposed, he awakes, and awaking exerts intellect, or reproduces the great principle of animation. The intellect called into action by his will to create worlds performs again the work of creation. The age of the gods, or twelve thousand of their years, being multiplied by seventy one, constitutes a *menwantara*, or the reign of a *Menu*. These are numberless *menwantara*'s, creations also, and destructions of worlds innumerable. The Being supremely exalted performs all this as if in sport again and again," p. 9, &c.

According to Mr. Dow, the *Bedang* teaches that when the four jugs have revolved, Rudder, with the ten spirits of dissolution, will roll a comet under the moon, that will involve all things in fire, and reduce the world to ashes. God will then exist



ist alone, for matter will be totally annihilated, p. 48. The author of Neadirsen, he says, maintains that the world is subject to successive dissolutions and renovations at certain stated periods. He divides these dissolutions into the lesser and the greater. The lesser dissolution will happen at the end of a revolution of the jugs. The world will then be consumed by fire, and the elements will be jumbled together; and after a certain space of time they will again resume their former order. When a thousand of these smaller dissolutions have happened, a *Mapherley*, or great dissolution, will take place. All the elements will then be reduced to their original *purmans*, or atoms, in which state they will long remain. God will then from his mere goodness and pleasure, restore *bisheesh*, or plasticity. A new creation will arise, and thus things have revolved in succession from the beginning, and will continue to do so to eternity, p. 72.

If we ask for some authority for this wonderful scheme, the learned bramins are entirely silent. It is a scheme of mere fancy. But overlooking this objection, there is certainly more of dignity, and the true sublime, in the doctrine of the scriptures, which represent the Divine Being as *never slumbering or sleeping*, that the work of creation, whether it had a beginning, or was, like its author, from all eternity, is for ever progressive; continually

ally advancing from imperfect to perfect, and that the object of the whole is not the sport of the creator, but the happiness of the universe.

That different accounts of so complex and fanciful a system as that of the Hindoos should be given by different bramins will not be thought extraordinary, and therefore the veracity of travellers, who had no apparent motive to falsify, and yet give different representations of it, is not hastily to be called in question.

According to Mr. Lord, p. 47, the first human pair had four sons, each destined to a different profession; but their wives had a separate creation, each of the sons being ordered to proceed in a different direction, where they met with them, and then returned to their parents. After this their posterity becoming very wicked, the Supreme Being destroyed them by an universal deluge. After this, there issued from the two sides of Brahma, who experienced all the pains of parturition, another man called *Manou*, and another woman, who had three sons and three daughters; and from them the world was peopled anew, p. 57. Here are evident traces of Noah and his three sons.

The Hindoo account of the creation is not more fanciful than other articles of their philosophy. From them it is probable that the Western nations derived their idea of *two principles in man*, and even that

that of a division of the intellectual principle into two parts. This doctrine, and that of the relation of those principles to the great soul of the universe, is contained in the following passage of the Institutes of Menu, p. 346. "That substance which gives a power of motion to the body, the wise call *eschetraynja*, or *jevatman*, the vital spirit, and that body which thence derives active functions they name *bhutatman*, or composed of elements. Another internal spirit, called *Mahat*, or the great soul, attends the birth of all creatures embodied, and thence in all mortal forms is conveyed a perception either pleasing or painful. Those two, the vital spirit, and reasonable soul, are closely united with the five elements, but connected with the Supreme Spirit, or divine essence, which pervades all beings, high and low. From the substance of that Supreme Spirit are diffused, like sparks from fire, innumerable vital spirits, which perpetually give motion to creatures exalted and base."

The great superiority of the spiritual to the corporeal part of man is the fundamental doctrine of the Hindoo system; and hence the satisfaction the Hindoos always express on the separation of them. The contempt for the body is strongly expressed in the following passage of the Institutes. "A mansion with bones for the rafters and beams, with nerves and tendons for cords, with muscles and blood

blood for mortar, with skin for its outward covering, filled with no sweet perfume, but loaded with feces and urine; a mansion infested by age and by sorrow, the seat of malady, harrassed with pains, haunted with the quality of darkness, and incapable of standing long; such a mansion of the vital soul let its occupier always cheerfully quit," p. 155.

The followers of Fo also regard the body with great contempt, and neglect the preservation of it. They therefore often kill themselves. The people of Siam think suicide an advantage to the soul, and often hang themselves on a tree called *Ton-po* (*Ezourvedam*, vol. 2, p. 40.)

From the Indian philosophy it is probable that the Manicheans had their idea of an original difference in souls, some being necessarily good, and others bad. For this is clearly expressed in the following passage of the Institutes of Menu, p. 5. "In whatever occupation the Supreme Being first employed any vital soul, to that occupation the same soul attaches itself spontaneously, when it receives a new body, again and again. Whatever quality, noxious or innocent, harsh or mild, unjust or just, false or true, be conferred on any being at its creation, the same quality enters it of course on its future births."

That all nature is animated, and that the souls which animate the lowest forms of things are capable of



rising to the highest state, is asserted in this work. "The souls that animate worms and insects, serpents, moths, beasts, birds and vegetables, attain heaven by the power of devotion," p. 340.

The Hindoo philosophy of the physical or corporeal world is not more rational than that of the intellectual. According to the Veda's, the moon is much higher than the sun. (*Ezourvedam*, vol 1. p. 260) According to Mr. Bernier, the Veda's teach that a certain dewtah, a kind of corporeal divinity, seizes on the sun at the time of an eclipse; that the sun, tho' himself a dewtah, is then in great pain and anguish, and that prayers, bathing and alms, are the means of effecting his deliverance. Alms given at that time, they say, are worth a hundred times as much as if they were given at any other. Accordingly, he saw a river crowded with people of all ranks, bathing at the time of an eclipse, and throwing water towards the sun, vol. 2, p. 107.

The Hindoos say that the general system consists of fourteen *Bhooboons*, or spheres, seven below, and six above that of the earth. The seven inferior worlds are inhabited by an infinite variety of serpents, described in every monstrous form that the imagination can suggest. The earth is called *Bhoor*, and mankind who inhabit it *Bhoor logue*. The spheres gradually ascending from thence are *Bobur*, whose inhabitants are called *Bobur logue*, those of the

the second *Sweigh* logue, those of the third *Mahur* logue, those of the fourth *Funney* logue, those of the fifth *Juppeh* logue and those of the sixth *Suttee* logue.

The *Bobur* is the vault of the visible heavens, in which the sun, moon and stars are placed. The *Sweigh* is the first paradise, and general receptacle of those who merit a removal from the lower earth. The *Mahur* logue are the Faquirs, and such persons as by the dint of prayer have acquired an extraordinary degree of sanctity. The *Funneh* logue, are also the souls of pious and moral men; and beyond this sphere they are not supposed to pass without some uncommon merit and qualifications. The sphere of *Juppeh* is the reward of those who have all their lives performed some wonderful act of penance and mortification, or who have died martyrs for their religion. The *Suttee* or highest sphere, is the residence of Birmah, and his particular favourites. This is the place of destination for those men who have never uttered a falsehood during their whole lives, and for those women who have voluntarily burned themselves with their husbands. (*Preface to the Gentoo Laws*, p. 45.) These different spheres, or worlds, the Hindoos suppose to be connected by a mountain, which they call *Merou*, and of which they relate many wonders. (*La Croze*, p. 283.)

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In this earth, they say, there are seven continents, or great portions of land; called *deeps* or *dwips*, and not so distant but they have some communication. For according to the pundits who compiled the Gentoo laws, the bird *Keraer* brought a man from the *Shakud deep*, which is the sixth in order, and cast him down on the *Jumboo deep*, the first in order, or that which the Hindoos inhabit, and the tribe that sprung from him they call *Deioul*. The length of the *Jumboo deep* they make to be a hundred thousand *Joojun*, that of the next twice as much, the next in the same duplicate proportion, till we come to the last, which they say is sixty-four times as large as this. (*Code of Gentoo Laws*, p. 104.)

These *deeps*, or continents, they say are surrounded by as many seas, one of which is of milk, another a solution of sugar, and others consisting of other liquors, (*La Croze*, p. 284) and according to them the water of our sea was once sweet, but having been drunk by *Agesta*, and voided in the form of urine, it became salt. (*Ezourvedam*, vol. 1, p. 26.)

We are not to consider all the popular notions of the Hindoos as parts of their religion, and therefore I do not give the following account of the *Amroutan* as such; but it is amusing, as it shews the wonderful powers of their imagination, and the easiness

easiness of their faith. The gods and the giants having applied to Vichnou for directions to procure the Amroutan (a liquid the drinking of which gives immortality) he bad them take the mountain *Mondora*, and taking the serpent *Bachaki* for a cord, to churn the ocean. In attempting this the mountain sunk, on which the god Vichnou transformed himself into a tortoise, and raised the mountain, by getting under it; and there it seems he continued some time. For they say that the friction given to him by the whirling round of the mountain in the operation of churning made him sleep, while the motion it gave to the ocean is the cause of its flux and reflux, which continues tho' the churning has long ceased. The first effect of this operation was the production of a fine horse, after that came two beautiful women, whom Vichnou took to himself, and at length came the Amroutan. The giants, however, were cheated of their share of it by the gods, and attacked them; but having the disadvantage of being mortal, they were put to flight, *ib.* vol. 1, p. 53, 69.

Having given this account of the physical system of the Hindoos, I shall add a curious specimen of their *Metaphysics*, and that from the first authority, the Institutes of Menu, which abounds with matter not at all more intelligible then this; but my readers must not expect from me any elucidation of it.

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“From the supreme soul” as quoted before “he drew forth mind, existing substantially, tho’ unperceived by sense, immaterial; and before mind, or the reasoning power, he produced consciousness, the internal monitor, the ruler. And before them both he produced the great principles of the soul, or first expansion of the divine idea, and all vital forms, endued with the three qualities of goodness, passion, and darkness, and the five perceptions of sense, and the five organs of sensation. Thus, having at once pervaded with emanations of the supreme spirit the minutest portions of six principles, immensely operative, consciousness, and the five perceptions, he framed all creatures. And since the minutest particles of visible nature have a dependance on these six emanations from God, the wise have accordingly given the name of *Sarisa*, or *depending on six*, to his image or appearance in visible nature. Thence proceed the great elements, endued with peculiar powers, and mind, with operations infinitely subtil, the unperishable cause of apparent forms. This universe, therefore, is compacted from the minute portions of these seven divine and active principles, the great soul, or first emanation, consciousness, and five perceptions, a mutable universe from immutable ideas. Among them each succeeding element acquires the quality of the preceding, and in as many degrees as each of them

them is advanced, with so many properties it is said to be endued," p. 3, 4.

We need not look into the writings of Moses, or any of the books of the Old Testament, for passages to compare with this. They contain nothing of the same kind. All the philosophy of the scriptures consists of such popular ideas as in common discourse are adopted even by modern philosophers, as that the earth is at rest, that the sun rises and sets, and that it is the heart of man, or something within him, that feels, thinks, &c. The scriptures give no idea of a soul that had existed before the body, or that will, or can, subsist and act independently of it. According to Moses, God made man of the *dust of the earth*, and afterwards put *breath*, or *life*, into him; and when he dies he is said to *return to the dust out of which he was formed*. Nothing is there said of other spheres, other worlds, other continents, or other seas; or indeed of any thing that properly falls within the province of philosophy. The scripture contains a system of pure *religious faith*, teaching us our duty in this life, and our expectations with respect to another, to which we are to be raised at a future period. On every other subject, we are left to our own speculations.

Wild and confused as is the Hindoo account of the origin of the universe, it is far preferable  
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to that which was generally adopted by the Greeks, whether it was properly their own, or, as it is thought, derived to them from the Egyptians, from whom they received the elements at least of their theology and mythology.

According to the Hindoos, the world had a creator; but according to the Greeks it had none. The matter out of which it arose was from eternity, and all things assumed their present forms in consequence of the operation of the present laws of nature, which also, it was taken for granted, had always been the same, and had no more any author than matter itself, notwithstanding they bear the marks of the most exquisite design. It seems never to have occurred to these *philosophers*, as the authors of this system were called, that such powers as those of gravitation, magnetism, &c. could not have been assumed by matter itself; but must have been imparted *ab extra*, and by some being who must have had the skill to adapt them in the wonderful manner in which they are adapted, to one another, so that the present system should have been the result of their joint operation.

But admitting these utterly inadmissible things, viz. the self existence of matter, and of the general laws to which it is now subject, how could such a wonderful and harmonious system as the present arise from these principles? The clearest account

count of this system is given by Diodorus Siculus, and it is briefly as follows. At first the whole mass of matter, out of which the forms of all things were derived, was in a state of *chaos*, and its parts in continual motion, in consequence of which the lighter parts disengaged themselves from the heavier; the particles of fire, of which the sun and other heavenly bodies consisted, taking the highest place, the air the next, and water and earth the lowest. Then the action of the hot sun upon the moist earth produced such a frothy surface as we now see on marshy ground; and by this means were formed the germs of all living creatures; those in which heat prevailed rising into the air, in the form of birds; while those which had more of an earthly nature became men, quadrupeds, and reptiles; and those in the constitution of which water prevailed were fishes. But when the earth was thoroughly dried, this production of living creatures ceased, and the races of them were continued in the method of natural generation.

I need not, surely, observe how wretchedly lame and absurd this system is, in all its parts; and yet, as an evidence of its truth and probability, it was alleged that an infinite number of rats are still produced by the heat of the sun in Egypt, at the annual inundation of the Nile. Thus mankind, instead of improving upon the system of Moses,



by the exercise of their reason on this great subject, wandered farther and farther into the regions of improbability and absurdity ; and the wisest of the Grecian philosophers, of whose different sects this was the principal object, never acquired more light with respect to it.

How far the Greeks in the time of Homer and Hesiod had lost sight of every thing rational and sublime in religion, we see in their poems. The cosmogony of Hesiod is that of the formation of the world without any supreme mind, and therefore does not deserve to be particularly described. These poets were not the authors of the system that we find in their writings. They ascribed nothing to their gods, but such actions as were generally thought to be agreeable to their natures ; and it is remarkable that neither in Hesiod nor Homer do we find any trace of sentiments so sublime as those of the Hindoos, especially that of a self-existent intelligent principle. Their gods had all perfectly human, and very imperfect, characters, and even Jupiter the chief of them, only excelled in strength ; and was himself, as well as the rest, subject to a *fate*, of which no account is given ; but whatever was thus fated to come to pass, they could not prevent.

These gods take different sides, some that of the Greeks, and others that of the Trojans. Their  
passions

passions are as violent, and their language as intemperate, as those of any men. They deceive and circumvent one another, they personally engage in the battles that were fought, and one of them, a female, is wounded.

Such, however, was the popular religion of the Greeks and Romans; and how could it contribute to elevate the mind, or purify the morals? And yet in the course of many ages they never acquired any better principles; and at length it was the preaching of a carpenter, and fishermen, and not the instruction of philosophers, that overthrew this monstrous and long established system.

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## SECTION VI.

### *Of the Hindoo Polytheism, and Idolatry.*

MR. LANGLES says (*Preliminary Discourse*, p. 147) "we must take care not to charge the Hindoos with *polytheism*." Mr. Holwell also severely censures modern writers for representing them as *gross idolaters* vol. 1, p. 6. "I am amazed" he says, p. 11 "that we should so readily believe the people of Indostan a race of stupid idolaters." Mr. Dow gives the same favourable idea of  
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the Hindoo worship. "Let us rest assured," he says, p. 83, "that whatever the external ceremonies of religion may be, the same infinite Being is the object of universal adoration."

But on whatever principles this is advanced, it will exculpate all the heathen world, in all ages, from the same charge. It is true that the Hindoos acknowledge one Supreme Being, from whom all power is derived. But they suppose that the immediate government of the world is placed by him in other hands. To these inferior deities their prayers and religious services are naturally addressed; and this worship is encouraged, and enjoined, in their sacred books.

Mr. Dow says, p. 76, "the veneration for different objects, as portions of God, arises in the common Indians to an idea of subalternate intelligences; but the learned bramins with one voice deny the existence of inferior divinities; and indeed all their religious books of antiquity confirm this assertion." That any person really conversant with the writings of the Hindoos should assert this will appear not a little extraordinary, after reading the extracts that I shall give from some of their books, of unquestionable antiquity and authority. Some bramins, no doubt, may be unbelievers in the general system, or even Atheists. There are such among christians, and christian ministers; but this  
has

has nothing to do with the proper Hindoo theology, in theory or practice.

According to their system "there sprung from the Supreme Being, as emanations of his divinity, an infinite number of subaltern deities and genii, of which every part of the visible world was the seat and temple. These intelligences did not barely reside in each part of nature. They directed its operations, each element being under the guidance of some being peculiar to it," (*Northern Antiquities*, vol. 1, p. 79.) These inferior gods being conceived to be of different characters and dispositions, it was natural for their worshippers to adopt different methods of deprecating their anger, and soliciting their favour. Hence have come a great variety of whimsical and absurd rites; and it had been well if this had been all. But so depraved as the opinions of men were of the objects of their worship, that rites of the most cruel and dreadful nature have been deemed necessary to gain their favour, while others of them have been supposed to be gratified by rites of the most impure kind. That this was the case with the Egyptians, all the ancient inhabitants of Palestine, the Chaldeans, the Greeks, and the Romans, cannot be denied; and it is no less the case with the Hindoos, not only according to the accounts of travellers, but their own sacred books; and the  
number



number of their gods exceeds that of any other people that we are acquainted with.

The veneration of the Hindoos for the images of their gods makes them chargeable with *idolatry*, as well as with *polytheism*, if there be any such thing in the world. Their learned bramins indeed say, that they do not worship the visible idol, but the invisible being represented by it. The same is said by persons of intelligence in every country. But if the common people thought so, they might soon be brought to worship an invisible and omnipresent being without an image, which bears no resemblance to him, and with which he is no more present than to any thing else. That the mere wood, or stone, of which the image consists, has any extraordinary power, was never supposed by any idolater; but they imagine that, after some form of consecration, the powers of the being to whom it is dedicated are brought into it, and then they pay it the same respect as if the superior being himself, in any other form, was before them.

Sir William Jones says (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 1, p. 53) that "the whole crowd of gods and goddesses in ancient Rome, and modern Varanes, mean only the powers of nature, and principally those of the sun, expressed in a variety of ways, and a multiplicity of fanciful names." But it is of no consequence whatever what has been the  
theoretical

theoretical origin of the heathen worship. Those different powers, or the same power under different names, have actually become, in the ideas of the worshippers, so many different persons, to whom they ascribe different attributes. They address them in different ways, and attend upon them with different rites ; so that to every real purpose they are to them quite different gods.

Besides the families of the first gods, says La Croze, p. 281, which are sufficiently numerous, the Hindoos have a prodigious number of inferior divinities, many millions in all. They pray, says Mr. Lord, to different deities according to their different occasions. To attain a happy marriage they pray to *Hurmout*, on taking a journey to *Gunnes*, in sickness to *Begenaut*. Soldiers pray to *Bimahem*, the wretched to *Syer*, and the fortunate to *Nycasser*, &c. If this be not polytheism, I do not know what is so.

It has been said that the Hindoos conceive all the parts of nature to be animated, even rocks and stones. It has been no uncommon thing for particular stones to be thought to conceal divinities ; and on this idea they have become objects of worship. The principal deity of the ancient Arabs, called *Dysares*, was a black stone, square, but not regular, four feet high and two feet broad, (*Fablonski's Pantheon Ægyptiorum*, vol. 1, p. 81)  
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The Hindoos, says Tavernier, vol. 2, p. 416, commonly have in their pagoda's a round stone, brought from the Ganges, which they worship as a god ; and one of their casts commonly wear small round stones about their necks, and which they put to their breasts when they pray. Rocks and mountains are also objects of veneration to the votaries of Lama (*Sketches relating to the history, &c. of the Hindoos*, vol. 2, p. 187.) Pietro della Valle says, p. 52, that the idol called Mahadeo, is a pillar of stone, thicker below than at the top. In another temple which he visited the idols were two stones, somewhat long, like the ancient *termini*, or landmarks, and painted. "All these idols," he says, "are served, adored, perfumed, offered to, and washed every day, as for pleasure (for the Indians take much pleasure in bathing often) by the bramins, who assist at this service with much diligence," p. 59.

The Chingala's of Ceylon worship a tree called *Bogaha*, in the form of which they believe that Budda was manifested (*Ezourvedam*, vol. 2, p. 47.) Under this tree they light lamps, and place images. *Delaport's voyages*, vol. 3, p. 395.)

Notwithstanding the general opinion that Brahma, Vichnou, and Sieb, had the same origin, and bear the same relation to the Supreme Being, some of the Hindoos attach themselves to one and others to another of them, and the generality only wor-  
ship

ship one of the three. (*Sonnerat*, vol. 1, p. 51.)

They even say that these divine personages quarrelled and fought, that during the battle the earth trembled, and the stars fell from the firmament ib. p. 152. The worshippers of Vichnou and those of Sieb, or Isuren, joined, and massacred those of Birmah p. 197, 205. Nay the worshippers of *Chiven*, which is another name for Sieb, acknowledge no other god, and consider Birmah and Vichnou as creatures compared to him, p. 17. They have even such a contempt for him, that they bathe and purify themselves after hearing the name of Vichnou p. 198. Others, however, think that Chiven and Vichnou are only different attributes of the same god p. 198. It is Chiven that is worshipped under the form of *lingam*, and Vichnou is the only god to whom they offer bloody sacrifices. His victims are cocks and kids, p. 157.

Mr. Sonnerat says that, besides those whom they place in the rank of gods, they have *saints*, whose pictures they place in their temples, and that they address prayers to them as well as to the gods p. 188. A particular history of seven of the Hindoo sects may be seen in Philips's account of Malabar, p. 34. The Lama of Tibet told Mr. Bogle that he worshipped three of the Hindoo gods, but not their inferior deities, (*Sketches relating to the history &c. of the Hindoos*, Vol. 2. p. 209.)

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These



These, it will be said, are the accounts of travellers. But in the sacred books of the Hindoos mention is made of various divinities besides the Supreme Being. The worship of the sun, says Sir William Jones, is principally recommended in the Veda's. (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, Vol. 1. p. 481) The institutes of Menu say p. 4. "The Supreme Being created an assemblage of inferior deities, and divine attributes, and pure souls, and a number of Genii exquisitely delicate." In this work mention is made, p. 351, of "orders of demigods that are wafted in airy cars, genii of the signs and lunar mansions, and *Daitya's*, or the offspring of Diti."

The worship paid to the manes, or ancestors, is a great article in the system, and is mentioned in almost every page of the Institutes. Of them it is said, p. 78, that "they are pleased with an oblation in empty glades, naturally clear, or the banks of rivers, and in solitary spots."

Even penances are said to be performed by deities as well as holy kings, p. 336. They are said to have taken oaths for the purpose of judicial evidence p. 204; and exactly as was practiced by the heathens in the western world, magistrates are directed in the code of Gentoo laws, "whatever country they shall conquer, to pay worship to the Dewtah  
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of the country, and to give much effects, and money to the bramins of that province." p 115.

A number of Hindoo deities are mentioned in the following directions given to the bramins in the Institutes of Menu. "In his domestic fire for dressing the food of all the gods, after the prescribed ceremony, let a bramin make an oblation each day to these following divinities, first to *Agni* god of fire, and to the lunar god, severally, then to both of them at once; next to the assembled gods, and afterwards to *Dhanwantari*, god of medicine, to *Culnu*, goddess of the day, when the new moon is discernible, to *Anumati*, goddess of the day after the opposition, to *Prayapati*, or the lord of creatures, *Dyava*, and *Prithivi*, goddesses of sky and earth, and lastly to the fire of the good sacrifice. Having thus with fixed attention offered clarified butter in all quarters, proceeding from the East in a Southern direction, to *Indra*, *Yama*, *Varuna*, and the god *Soma*, let him offer his gift to animated creatures; saying, I salute thee Maruts, or winds. Let him throw dressed rice near the door, saying, I salute the water gods in water; and on his pestle and mortar saying, I salute the gods of large trees. Let him do the like in the North East, or near his pillar, to *Sri*, the goddess of abundance; in the South West, or at the foot of his bed, to the propitious goddess *Bhadracali*, in the centre

centre of his mansion to Brahma, and his household god. To all the gods assembled let him throw up his oblation in open air by day, to the spirits who walk in light, and by night to those who walk in darkness." (p. 62)

All the neighbouring nations, whose religions have some affinity to that of the Hindoos, are polytheists. The Siamese say that the reign of a deity is limited to a certain number of years, after which he sinks into eternal repose, and another succeeds him in the government of the universe. Somonocodom, they say, was the last of them (*Jesuits Account*, p. 289.)

The Chinese, Sir William Jones says, had an ancient system of ceremonies and superstitions, which the government and the philosophers appear to have encouraged, which has an apparent affinity with some parts of the ancient Indian worship. They believe in the agency of genii and tutelary spirits presiding over the stars, and the clouds, and over all the elements; which, like the Hindoos, they reckon five, and particularly over fire, the most brilliant of them. To these deities they offered victims in high places (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 1, 228.) If this be not a system of polytheism, leading to every evil arising from polytheism elsewhere, I do not know how to define the word.

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In this respect it will hardly be pretended that the Hebrew institutions were copied from those of the Hindoos or the Egyptians. That there is but one God, the maker and governor of all things, and, without any visible representation, the sole object of worship, is the great principle of the Hebrew religion; and in all the writings of Moses it is held out as directly opposed to the polytheism and idolatry of all the neighbouring nations. The greatest stress imaginable is laid on this article, and the Hebrew nation was evidently set apart by the Divine Being to be the great medium of his communications with mankind, and to bear their testimony against the universally prevailing corruption of true religion, which was then taking place; and it is evident from fact that nothing but such a supernatural interposition as that which Moses relates could have prevented that one nation from being contaminated with it.

The natural proneness of the Israelites to polytheism and idolatry appears in the most undeniable manner from the whole of their history. Their ancestors were idolaters before their coming into Canaan, that part of the same family which remained in Mesopotamia continued to be so. The posterity of Jacob were so in Egypt, and their predilection for that system we see in the wilderness, and from the time of their settlement in the land  
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of Canaan to the Babylonish captivity. Tho, in consequence of several interpositions of divine power, they were occasionally recovered from it, they relapsed again and again. What was it, then, what *could* it have been, that effected a radical cure of that propensity, but some measure of the same kind that had from time to time given a check to it? Certainly it could not have been their own reason, or natural inclination, but a power which they could not control. And it has been by means of this one despised nation (for Jesus, the founder of the christian religion, was of it) that the knowledge of the one true God has been preserved and propagated in the world to this very day. All nations that have not been, directly or indirectly, instructed by them are at this day idolators. It is to revelation only, and not to any exertion of human reason, that we are indebted for such great and important light. This has been the only radical cure of this miserable superstition, by which the world has been so long enslaved, and from which have flowed the greatest calamities.

There is something so great and sublime in the idea of *one mind* comprehending and governing this world, and much more the whole universe, that we cannot wonder that it was not long retained even by those who had originally received it by tradition from  
preceding

preceding revelations, after divine communications had been long discontinued. Much less can we wonder that men should never have discovered this great truth themselves, or have recovered it after it had been lost.

That there is one God, the original author of all things, was retained in the East, and especially by the Hindoos ; but they thought there were many inferior deities presiding over different parts of the system. And when these inferior deities were considered as emanations from the great source of all being, we the less wonder at their becoming objects of adoration. The precept of Ormusd, in some Extracts from the Zendavesta, is " Adore all that I have created. It is the same as if you adored me," (*Annual Register for 1762*, p. 119.) This authorizes the worship even of the inanimate parts of nature.

The ancient religion of the Northern European nations was, in several respects, similar to that of the East ; and there we find the acknowledgment of one Supreme God, with the worship of several inferior ones. Three deities, *Odin* the god of war, *Frea* his wife, and *Thor* the god of thunder, were the principal objects of worship to all the Scandinavians. The Danes paid the highest honours to *Odin*, the Norwegians and the people of Iceland to *Thor*, and the Swedes to *Frea* ; who they thought presided over

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ver the seasons of the year, and bestowed peace, fertility and riches. (*Northern Antiquities*, vol. 1, p. 97.)

Among all the *reasons* for polytheism, the most curious that I have met with is the following of one of the speakers of Plutarch is his treatise on the cessation of Oracles. "There is no such thing in nature" he says, "as one man only, one horse, one star, one deamon. There is not in nature only one world."

In favour of polytheism, it is often said to be mild and tolerant in its nature. The heathens in general, believing that every nation and district had its peculiar gods, and modes of worship, did not molest them in it; and when they were in any foreign country they did not scruple to conform to the religion of it. But they allowed no foreign religions at home. In Greece as well as at Rome, there were very severe laws on this subject, and any contempt expressed for the public religion was deemed unpardonable, as appeared in the case of Alcibiades. It was in consequence of these ancient laws that the christians were persecuted by the early Roman emperors; while the Jews, being a foreign people, were allowed the profession of their own religion.

The Egyptians were much divided among themselves on the subject of religion, and the effect

fects of their mutual animosity were sometimes unpleasant. Herodotus says (Lib. 2, l. 42) the people of Thebes abstain from sheep, and sacrifice goats, whereas the inhabitants of the Mendesian nome abstain from goats, and sacrifice sheep. Plutarch, in his treatise *De Iside et Osiride*, says "the Lycopolitans are the only people in Egypt who eat sheep, because the wolf, which they worship, does so; and in our times the Oxyrynchites (or those of the city in which the pike is worshipped) because the Cynopolitans (or the inhabitants of a city in which the dog is worshipped) ate that species of fish, caught the dogs, and killed them, and even ate of them, as at a sacrifice. Thence arose a civil war, in which they did much mischief to one another, till they were chastized by the Romans." He adds, "the greater part of the Egyptians worshipping the animals themselves, have not only made their religious worship a subject of scorn and derision; but while this practice makes some persons extravagantly superstitious, it drives others to atheism."

According to the same author, there was much bigotry among the Persians. The Magi, he says, descended from Zoroaster, adored the hedghog, and other creatures, but had a deadly spite against water rats, and thought that man near to the gods who destroyed the most of them. (*Symposiass*, qu. 5.)

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Like



Like the ancient Egyptians, the Hindoos, we have seen, quarrel with one another on account of their attachment to their different deities, especially in Malabar. The worshippers of Vichnou, says La Croze, and of Isuren, condemn one another, and use different forms of prayer, which have no relation to one another, p. 256.

Mild as the religion of the Hindoos appears to be, and gentle as are their general manners, they can assume a very different character when their religion is concerned. It has been seen that the brahmins exterminated the Sammanians, and the followers of Budda with fire and sword, leaving none of them on the West side of the Ganges. They call them atheists. (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 2, p. 265.) They consider all those who blaspheme the divinity (by which they, no doubt, mean their own religion) as monsters, to be avoided with the utmost care, and say that the king ought to exterminate them (*Ezourvedam*, p. 274.) And when any Hindoo is converted to christianity, he is not only banished from his tribe, but abandoned to the insults of the whole nation.

Similar to this was the treatment of those who were excommunicated by the Druids. They were not only excluded from the sacrifices, but deprived of the benefit of the laws. They were incapable of any employment, and their society was avoided by

by all persons. In what light the Gauls and Britons considered persons of other nations, and other religions, is not said.

The Hindoos regard all christians with the greatest abhorrence and detestation, as much below the lowest of their own casts. Mr. Sonnerat says, vol. 1, p. 194. "Nothing can reconcile the Hindoos to the European customs, and their hatred only increases by living with them. Some merchants only, more from interest than inclination, shew less aversion to strangers; but the bramins, the penitents, and many others, have an invincible horror for every thing that resembles the customs of Europeans."

According to some well informed travellers, the temper of the bramins in general is by no means amiable. They can be cruel and malignant where their religion is concerned. But I do not lay much stress on any thing not authorized by their Institutions, since there may be bad men who profess the best religion. Of this we see examples enow among christians. (*La Croze*, p. 296.) When the Hindoos converse with Christians on the subject of religion, they profess to believe that the Supreme Being is equally pleased with all religions, and intended that all the different modes of it should be adopted by different nations.

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means agreed on the subject of religion, and there are unbelievers among them as well as among the ancient heathens. La Croze says, p. 324, there are atheists in India, and treatises in defence of atheism. In a tract translated from the Sanscrit, in the *Dissertations on the history, &c. of Asia*, vol. 2, p. 103, mention is made of six atheistical systems of philosophy. Mr. Dow says, p. 20, the Boad, or atheists, are the common enemies of every system of religion. And the Malabarians, writing to the Danish missionary, say, there are among us men who live like brutes, without any religion at all. (*Phillips Account of Malabar*, p. 197.)

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## SECTION VII.

### *Of the Religion of Egypt.*

**T**HERE is no ancient nation from which Moses can with so much probability be supposed to have borrowed any of his institutions, civil or religious, as the Egyptians, among whom he was educated, and to whose rites it is evident that the Israelites were much attached. I shall therefore give a general outline of the religion of Egypt, extracted chiefly from that excellent work of Jablonski,

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lonki, intitled *Pantheon Egyptiorum*. This writer has been peculiarly happy in his investigation of this very abstruse and difficult subject, as I think must be the opinion of all persons who will read his work with attention. It is at the same time the most favourable account that has been given of this system; and from his representation of it, and of the changes it underwent, we shall clearly see not only the extreme improbability of Moses having derived any lights from it, but also the great importance of revelation; since without it, the most intelligent of men, left to their own speculations, gave into the greatest absurdities, and such as were connected with cruel and obscene rites, and consequently great dissoluteness of manners.

According to Jablonski the knowledge and worship of the Supreme Being was long retained by the Egyptians, and they did not think, with the Stoics and others, that he was bound by any blind fate, independent of his own will. This supreme intelligence was denominated *Neitha*. The same, or his principal attribute, was also designated by the terms *Phthas*, and *Kneph* (Cnuphis) and in their hieroglyphics he was represented by a serpent. They had also an idea of a chaos of inert matter, out of which the Supreme Being formed all things. The origin of all things was also denominated *Athor*, called by the Greeks the *celestial Venus*.

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It seems to have been all nature or the powers of nature, personified.

In a course of time, however, the worship of the Supreme Being was neglected in Egypt, as well as in other parts of the world, and the regards of the people were confined to visible objects, especially the heavenly bodies, as having the most sensible influence on the earth, and on which their well being more immediately depended; and they worshipped the sun and moon under their proper names; that of the former *Phre*, and that of the latter *Io*. They also paid some worship to the stars, and the five planets. These, together with the sun and moon, were the *seven great gods* of Egypt, and when they are called *eight*, the Supreme Being was included with them. These were the *Cabiri*, &c. of the Greeks. It is probable that the erection of obelisks and pyramids, with which Egypt abounded, had some relation to the worship of the sun, as also had the sacred name consisting of *three letters*. These Jablonski supposes to have been *phre* abovementioned. But as the celebrated *triliteral name* among the Hindoos is *oum*, and *on*, was also at one time the name or title of the sun in Egypt (whence we read of *the priest of On*, and a city of that name, called by the Greeks *Heliopolis*, sacred to him) I rather think that *this* was the mystical word in Egypt, as well as in Hindostan.

In time, however, the worship of the stars and planets became confined to the priests, who applied the knowledge they had of them to the purpose of calculating nativities, and other modes of divination.

The next change that the religion of Egypt underwent was in consequence of the speculations of the priests, and men of learning, concerning the various positions of the sun and moon with respect to the earth, and the other properties and powers of these great luminaries, and their giving them different names, expressive of those relations and properties. After this, the worship of the sun and moon by their proper names gradually ceased, other terms being introduced, and peculiar rites appropriated to each; so that in time they came to be considered as so many different deities; and it is now with difficulty that they can be traced to their origin. This worship of the sun and moon under symbolical names Jablonski thinks was accomplished in the 4th century after the Exodus, in consequence of a reformation that was then made in the Egyptian calendar, which the priests were enabled to do by the attention they had given to the science of astronomy. About that time, in other countries as well as in Egypt, the sun was seldom worshipped under any other names than such as *Osiris*, *Baal*, *Moloch*, *Chemosh*, &c. but the term *Osiris* he



he supposes to have been known in Egypt some time before the arrival of the Israelites in the country. Under this name the sun was considered as the regulator of time ; and as king of the heavens, he was called *Remphath*. In the winter solstice he was *Scrapis*, worshipped under that name at Sinopium near Memphis, and at Racotis near Alexandria. As beginning to emerge from this low state he was *Harpocrates* ; when arrived at the vernal equinox he was *Amun*, and under that name was worshipped at Thebes. In the summer solstice he was *Horus*, and considered as in his full strength he was *Semo*, and *Hercules*.

About the same time that the sun was worshipped under the name of *Osiris*, the moon obtained that of *Isis* ; and in time was worshipped in preference to any other deity, because the moon was thought to have more influence on the earth than any other of the heavenly bodies. She was thought more beneficent than the sun, whose excessive heat often dried and burned up the fruits of the earth. Sometimes, however, by the term *Isis* was understood the fruitful part of the land of Egypt, as being made so by the influence of the moon ; and sometimes it was even synonymous to the earth in general.

But the moon, as well as the sun, was worshipped under more names than one. The new moon

was

was the goddess *Bubastis*, and the full moon *Buti*. Considered as continually changing, and often punishing the crimes of men, she was *Tithrambo*, corresponding to the *Hecate* of the Greeks. She was also *Ilythia*, or *Lucina*, particularly invoked in childbearing. *Sothis*, or the dogstar, was peculiarly sacred to *Isis*, as other stars and planets were sacred to other deities, who were supposed to direct their influences. The heliacal rising of this star being when the sun was in cancer, and the rising of the Nile being then first perceptible, this great event was chiefly ascribed to the moon. This was in the month called *thoth*, the first in the Egyptian year, and thought to be the birth day of the world.

The worship of the Egyptians was not confined to the celestial bodies. The river *Nile* was an object of worship to them in a very early period, being considered as the father and the saviour of the country. Temples were erected to this river, and priests appointed to serve in them, especially at *Nilopolis*; but in every considerable city there were priests of the Nile, and among other offices it was their business to bury in sacred monuments all persons who were killed by crocodiles, or drowned in the river; thinking there was something divine in them. The Nile was sometimes called the earthly *Osiris*, and the bull *Apis* was  
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considered as his symbol, or of the fertility which Egypt derived from it. Before this river entered Egypt it was called *Siris*, which Mr. Bruce says signifies *a dog* in those countries, and thence the name *Sirius*, or the *dog star*.

Besides the worship of benevolent deities, the Egyptians, like all other heathen nations, paid divine honours to a malevolent one, commonly called *Typhon*; he being considered as the author of almost all evil, and they worshipped him with a view of averting the evils which they thought it was in his power to inflict upon them. To him they once sacrificed men with red hair, he being, they said, of that colour (on which account they held it in great abhorrence) but afterwards red oxen. When they did not gain their object by this means, they took some of the animals that were sacred to him into a dark place, where they terrified and beat them; and if that did not answer, they killed them out right.

But the circumstance that most of all distinguished the Egyptians from all other nations, and which drew upon them the ridicule of them all, was their worshipping live animals; the origin of which is very obscure. If it was known to the priests at the time of their intercourse with the Greeks, it was communicated only to those who were initiated into their mysteries. The probability

lity is that they were considered as emblems of divine attributes. These animals were, however, kept in the precincts of their temples, all possible attention was paid to them, and sacrifices and other rites performed, as to the deities themselves, who must, no doubt, have been supposed to animate them.

In common with the Hindoos, the Egyptians had a greater veneration for *cows* than for any other cattle. The cow was sacred to Athor, called by the Greeks the celestial Venus, and a live cow was generally kept in her temples.

But in later times much greater homage was paid to three bulls, one called *Mnevis* at Heliopolis, which was said to represent the sun; another was *Apis* at Memphis to represent the moon, and the third was called *Onuphis*, the symbol of the Nile, at Hermunthi. The worship of *Mnevis* Jablonski thinks was prior to the Exodus, but it was little attended to after the introduction of *Apis*.

When an *Apis* died, his successor, into whom the same divine spirit was supposed to pass, was known by certain marks, especially the figure of a new moon or his right side. When such a one was found, he was first brought to Nilopolis, and kept there forty days; after which he was conducted to his temple at Memphis, where other bulls were sacrificed to him, and he was in every other respect  
treated



treated as a divinity. It was deemed necessary, however, to give particular attention to his food, and lest he should grow too fat by drinking the water of the Nile, he was always watered out of a particular fountain. But after a certain time, which is supposed to have been twenty five years, he was drowned by the priests in a sacred well. If he died before that time, he had the most sumptuous funeral, and all the country showed signs of the greatest anxiety and distress till another was found.

Sheep, and especially rams, were sacred both to Neitha, whose other symbol was a serpent, and to Amun, called by the Greeks *Jupiter Ammon*, at Thebes; and a live ram was kept in his temple. Mendes, called *Pan*, by the Greeks, was worshipped in the form of a live goat, at a city which went by his name, and no goats were eaten by his worshippers. He was also represented by the *phallus*, and was said to be of both sexes, as were several other of the Egyptian deities. The rites of his worship were more abominable than any thing else we read of in all history.

*Anubis*, the companion of *Osiris* and *Isis*, was worshipped in the form of a dog; and if in any house a dog died, the family went into the deepest mourning. Jablonski supposes that *Anubis* represented the horizon; but Mr. Bruce with more probability,

probability, I think, supposes that he was the dog-star. His image was a man with the head of a dog, and it was always either made of solid gold, or gilded.

Cats were sacred to *Bubastis*; and at the city which bore the name of this deity cats were buried with the greatest solemnity. Field mice were the living images of *Buto*, who had an oracle at a city of that name. Tho' divine honours were not paid to geese, they were considered as in some measure sacred to *Isis*, and were sacrificed to her.

All the animals abovementioned were of the useful kind; but they also worshipped others of a mischievous nature, as lions, wolves, apes, crocodiles, the hippopotamus, and serpents, as living images of some of their deities. The crocodile and hippopotamus were sacred to *Typhon*, and so also was the ass. The crocodile was worshipped with many superstitious rites; and when children were devoured by those animals, the parents were taught to consider it as an honour to them, and they did not mourn for them. The hippopotamus was worshipped at *Papremis*.

The Egyptians also paid divine honours to several plants as well as to animals, especially to onions and garlick, of which, on this account, they thought it impiety to eat. The lotus was sacred

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to Harpocrates, because it flowered in the winter solstice, to which he bore a relation.

Thus was the knowledge of the one true God, the maker and preserver of all things, lost, and his worship wholly abandoned, in this nation famed for wisdom, and the attention they gave to religion, so as to be respected as the fountain of science to the Greeks and Romans. Now, let any candid person who has read the Pentateuch say, whether he has discovered any thing in the institutions of Moses that resembles the religious system, or rites, of the Egyptians. They are in every respect the reverse of each other. Could Moses have borrowed any thing from the Egyptians, and not have adopted the worship of any of their numerous deities, or of the living animals which represented them, or any of their impure rites? Numerous as were the superstitious restrictions which the Egyptians laid themselves under with respect to food, dress, &c. none of them are recommended by Moses; and in the books of the Old Testament in general, the religion of Egypt is spoken of with as much detestation as that of the other neighbouring nations, that of the Canaanites excepted, with whom human sacrifices prevailed to a greater degree than in any other part of the world.

Tho' there are, as I have shewn, many points of resemblance between the religion of the ancient Egyptians

gyptians and that of the Hindoos, yet in many respects they are exceedingly different, so that tho' they may have gone together at the first, they must have separated at a very early period. The Hindoos never worshipped living animals, which is a principle feature in the religion of the Egyptians; and the names, the characters, and the images, of their deities have very little resemblance to each other. The Hindoos paid no such worship to the sun and moon under the various aspects which they bore to the earth; and their Brahma, Vichnou, and Sieb, have hardly any resemblance of Osiris, Isis, and Typhon, or to Osiris, Orus, and Typhon, except in the number *three*; and the respect which the Hindoos still preserve for the Supreme Being, the author and the end of all things, was entirely lost among the Egyptians.

There is, however, a very remarkable resemblance between the religion and Mythological fables of the Greeks and those of the Hindoos, tho' we are not able to trace any connection there ever was between them. Among the numerous points of resemblance that Sir William Jones and Colonel Wilford have observed between the system of the Hindoos and that of the western part of the world, very few relate to Egypt. The great mass of them relate wholly to Greece, or the fables of the Greeks concerning Egypt, and not to the ideas  
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of the Egyptians themselves. That my reader may be the better judge of this I shall just bring into one view the several points of resemblance that have with the greatest probability been traced between the Oriental and Western systems, tho' most of them have been mentioned before.

Janus is thought to be Ganesa ; Saturn, Satya-vratta ; Jupiter or Diespiter, Divespiter, Lord of the sky, is the same with Indra. Osiris and Isis were Hwara and Isi ; Ceres, Sris ; Dyonyfos Rama, or according to C. Wilford Diva Nahauha, in the spoken dialect, Deonauha. Pan, was Pavan ; Apollo, Crishna ; Vulcan was Wiswacarman ; Venus, Bhavani ; Hermes, or Mercury, Nared. The Tauric Diana, or Hecate, was Cali ; Mars, Carticeya ; Juno, Parvati ; Minerva, Durga ; Cupid according to Sonnerat, was Manmadin ; Bacchus, Bhagvat ; Typhon, Mahadeva ; Cepheus, Capeja ; Perseus, Parasica ; Andromeda, Antarmada ; Cassiopea, Cosyapa ; and Simele, Syamala : The muses and nymphs were the Gopya of Mathuren, and of Goverdhan, the Parnassus of the Hindoos. Prometheus was Pramathesa ; Labdacus, Lubdahaca ; Jocasta, Yogacashta ; Laius or Linus, Linafer ; Cadmus, Cardom, and the Macrobian, Marcaba. How few of these parallels have any relation to Egypt.

## SECTION

SECTION VIII.

*Of the Religion of the Schamans.*

THE religion of the Hindoos is far too complex to have been, as Sir William Jones supposes, the oldest system of polytheism and idolatry. It is evidently a refinement on something much more simple, and this appears to me to have been the system of the *Sammanes*, whom the Greek writers mention as a sect of philosophers in India, opposed to the *Brachmanes*, and to be the same with those who are now called *Schamans* in Siberia. Indeed, it is natural to look for the oldest customs, and the oldest religions, among nations the farthest removed from the centre of civilization. As they were probably the first that emigrated, they would, of course, carry with them the notions and the practices that prevailed in the earliest times.

Both the people and the priests of the Schaman religion are at present wholly illiterate, but the old *Sammanes* are said to have written many books in philosophy and theology (*La Croze*, vol. 2, p. 293) and they are not the only people who furnish an example of sinking into barbarism from a state

of considerable improvement. The Sammanians being persecuted by the Bramins, and driven by them out of India proper, are thought to have taken refuge in Pegu, Siam, and other countries beyond the Ganges, and it is supposed that the religion of those countries was derived from their principles. The religion of the Lamas in Tibet is also said to be a reformed Schamanism, (See the work intitled *Russia, introduction*, p. 76,) from different parts of which the following account of Schamanism is chiefly taken. It is commonly ascribed to Mr. Tooke, and is certainly a work of great value.

As the followers of Budda were likewise persecuted by the bramins, and they also fled to the other side of the Ganges, some are of opinion that he was worshipped there under the appellation of *Somonocodom*. But since the term for *God* is in the language of some of the Tartars *Kutai*, or *Gudai*, and in the Persian *Khoda*, (which very much resembles our word *God*.) *Somonocodom* may signify the *God of the Schamans*, ib. p. 27. As to the word *Schaman*, Loubiere says it signifies a *man living in the woods*, or a *hermit*, which is applicable enough to one who is addicted to a life of contemplation. The word *Talapoin* is said to have the same signification in the language of some of the neighbouring nations.

In the tenets and practices of the Schamans we

may

may see a faint outline of the religion of the Hindoos. They believe in one God, the maker of all things; but they think that he pays no attention to the affairs of men, leaving the government of the world to inferior beings, to whom, therefore, all their devotions are addressed. Like the Egyptians and Hindoos, they represent the divine attributes by the figure of both the sexes. Both the celestial bodies, and all terrestrial objects of considerable magnitude, are objects of worship to them, tho' some of them only believe that mountains, and great bodies of water, are the habitations of the gods, and not themselves animated. They have, however, a great variety of subordinate deities, whom they invoke for different purposes, viz. one for health, another for their cattle, another when they travel, another for the women, another for their children, another for their rein deer; &c. &c. &c. thinking that particular spirits preside over, and have the care of them. But tho' they have goddeffes, as well as gods, they do not believe that they are married. These spirits they suppose appear to their priests in the form of bears, serpents, or owls; and on this account they have a particular respect for those animals.

Besides these deities of a nature superior to man, the Siberians worship the *manes* of their ancestors, and especially the settlers of colonies, whom they regard



regard as demigods, imagining that the gods make use of their ministry in the government of the world.

They not only suppose that there are superior beings of very different dispositions, some friendly, and others unfriendly to men, but think the best disposed of them are sometimes partial, obstinate, and vindictive; and over the malevolent deities they place one of much superior power, whom they call *Schaitan*. But tho he is very wicked, they think it possible to appease him, and therefore much of their worship is addressed to him.

They have no temples, but perform their religious rites in the open air, on eminences, or the banks of rivers. In some places their religious ceremonies are performed at any hour of the day indifferently, but generally during the night, by the light of a fire kindled for the purpose.

They have idols of stone, or wood, having some rude resemblance of the human form, and they pretend to feed them, smearing their faces with blood and grease. By way of incensing them, they make a smoke with burning flesh, blood, or boughs of fir and wormwood before them. But when misfortunes befall them, they load them with abuse, sometimes dash them against the ground, throw them into the water, or beat them with rods.

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The Kamtchadales erect little pillars, which they entwine with ivy, and regard them as gods.

They expect but little from their prayers not accompanied with offerings; and except swine, they believe that almost all other animals, as well as birds, fishes, and eatables of every kind, will be acceptable. In travelling they often make these offerings to the mountains they pass by, or to the rivers they cross.

Their modes of divination are various. One of them is performed in the following manner. Having made an offering to their gods, they throw up the wooden bowl in which it was presented into the air, and if it light on the ground, with its mouth upwards, they think it a good omen; but if it fall with the mouth downwards, they think the gods have not accepted their offerings.

Man they believe to be a compound of soul and body; and that immediately after death the soul passes into another state of existence; which, however, most of them think to be at best a very uncomfortable one, and therefore they have a great dread of death. But others of them expect to go into a state better than the present, and one that will abound with sensual gratifications, and these sometimes put an end to their lives with much unconcern. Some also order their bodies to be burned, as a means of purifying them, and thereby securing

curing them from the persecution of subterranean spirits. For they suppose all the dead to be in a place under ground.

Tho' they do not think the soul to be a solid substance, they think that its employment, and enjoyments too, in a future state will be similar to those in this; and therefore they bury with them cattle, and utensils of various kinds, whatever has been of any use to them here. Also, believing animals to have souls as well as men, they speak to the bears, and whales, &c. after they have killed them, as if they were living, and reasonable beings. Women they regard as greatly inferior to men, created merely to be subservient to men, and their treatment of them is contemptuous and shocking.

The priesthood among the professors of this religion does not descend from father to son, but is a voluntary profession. Their priests are considered as mediators between the gods and men, and possessing a power of appeasing the wrath of the gods, and conciliating their favour. By beating a magical drum they pretend to make spirits appear and disappear at pleasure; and during the celebration of their religious rites, they say that their souls sometimes leave their bodies, and having conversed with their gods, they report what they have learned

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ed of them, so that there is much artifice mixed with their superstition.

The religion of the North Americans is fundamentally the same with that of the Siberians, which furnishes another evidence of their derivation from them. It will hardly, however, be supposed that this system, tho probably more ancient than the times of Moses, was of any use to him in the formation of his. Every system of heathenism, ancient or modern, was formed on principles fundamentally different from those of the Hebrew scriptures.

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## SECTION IX.

*Of the different Casts among the Hindoos.*

ONE of the circumstances in which I have observed that there was an agreement between the institutions of the Hindoos and those of the Egyptians, was the division of the people according to their professions, or employments. These make so many different *casts*, in each of which the son is obliged to follow the profession of his father. But this distinction is carried much farther, and much more stress is laid upon it, in the Hindoo system. It makes an important part of their religion; whereas



whereas with the Egyptians it was rather a civil institution. It is a system, however, which, not having been adopted by mankind in general, must have been thought improper and inconvenient; and certainly it is so in a high degree.

All men, it cannot be denied, are born equal, and reason requires that no distinctions be made after birth, besides such as the good of the whole community makes necessary. It is, no doubt, the best upon the whole, that the son should inherit the father's estate, because it is a powerful motive to general industry; and most nations have allowed peculiar privileges to certain classes of their citizens, in order to prevent dangerous contentions, and because it was thought that, educated as they necessarily would be, they would be better qualified to serve their country in certain respects. On this account there have been families of *nobles* in most of the countries of Europe. But this had been found by experience to have been carried too far, that is, farther than the common good required. Such privileges are now generally regarded with jealousy and dislike. They have not been adopted in this country, they are now discarded in France, and in other countries of Europe.

In the East in general, there are no hereditary honours or employments, except in that of the reigning family, and in some that of the priesthood, because  
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cause it was thought that a peculiar degree of sanctity (the idea of which was by some means or other attached to a particular family) made them more revered. But the Hindoos have not only hereditary princes, and priests, but every separate employment is confined to certain tribes or families, and the most unnecessary and unjust distinctions are made with respect to them.

This system must confine the faculties of men, nature often fitting them for one employment and the system confining them to another. Indeed, with us we see few men making any distinguished figure in the employment for which they were educated. Great natural ability generally leads men to look beyond what is immediately before them, and to attempt something of which their parents and family have been incapable; and opportunities frequently occur which enable them to pursue their natural inclination. Also men frequently change their pursuits to their own advantage, and that of the public.

But the great wisdom ascribed to the founders of the Hindoo institutions has made no provision to favour this propensity of nature. On the contrary, the greatest stress imaginable is by the Hindoos laid on the difference of rank in society, and in their opinion nothing can be of more consequence. "In whatever country," say the Institutes of Menu,  
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"such men are born as destroy the purity of the four casts, that country soon perishes, together with the natives of it." p. 296. This, however, is a prediction that does not appear to have been verified by fact. As this distinction of casts is one of the leading features in the system of the Hindoos, and many of their laws and customs have a reference to it, I must not content myself with giving this general account, but enter into many particulars relating to it.

The origin which the Hindoos give to this distinction of casts is not a little fanciful. In the Institutes of Menu, where the Supreme Being is spoken of in the form of Brahma, we read, p. 5; "That the human race might be multiplied, he caused the *bramins*, the *Chatirya*, the *Vaiiffya*, and the *Sudra* to proceed from his mouth, his arms, his thighs, and his feet." The same account is given by the pundits who compiled the Code of Gentoo laws, with this seeming difference, that these four casts were created by the Supreme Being himself, who left the remainder of the creation to be completed by Brahma, or, as he is there called, *Burmha*. "The principle of truth," as quoted before, p. 99, "having first formed the earth, &c. produced a being called *Burmha*, for the creation of all beings. Afterwards he created the *bramins* from his mouth, the *Cheteree* from his arms, the *Bice* from  
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his thighs, and the Sooder from his feet; and he ordered Burmha to complete the other creations, and settle the several employments of the bramins, the cheteree, the bice, and the sooder, which he had created; and he committed the government of all beings to Burmha." It immediately follows, however, that Burmha produced men as well as other creatures; so that, according to this work, there seems to have been two origins of mankind. Perhaps we are to understand that the Hindoos came immediately from the Supreme Being, and the rest of mankind from Burmha.

The four orders being produced, their respective duties were assigned to them as follows. "To the bramins he assigned the duties of reading the Veda, of teaching it, of sacrificing, and assisting others to sacrifice. To defend the people, to read the Veda, and to sacrifice, are the duties of the chhatriya. To keep herds of cattle, to sacrifice, to read the scripture, to carry on trade, and to cultivate the land, are prescribed to a vaisya. One duty the supreme ruler assigned to the sudra, viz. to serve the abovementioned classes, without depreciating their worth," (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 12)

These offices are not, however, so rigorously prescribed, but that many cases occur in which a person of a higher order may do what belongs to a lower. Thus "a bramin unable to subsist by his



his proper duties may follow the profession of a soldier, if not by this, then by that of a merchant, or by agriculture," *ib.* p. 299. "A military man may subsist by any of these means, but at no time must he have recourse to the highest, or sacerdotal," *ib.* p. 301. "And he who without necessity discharges the duty of another class, immediately forfeits his own," *ib.*

Notwithstanding all the provisions of law, it was not possible to prevent an intermixture of these classes, by the intermarriage of persons living in the same society. This was a circumstance for which the laws themselves have therefore provided. "By the intermixture of classes," say the Institutes of Menu, "by their marriages with women who ought not to be married, and by their omission of prescribed duties, impure classes have been formed," p. 292. These classes are here enumerated, and their ranks and employments prescribed; and in this account it is said that "a sudra begets on a brahmin woman a son more vile than himself, and any other low man begets on a woman of the four classes a son yet lower. Six of these low classes marrying inversely have produced fifteen other still lower tribes, the base producing still baser, and in a direct order they have produced fifteen more,"

In the Code of Gentoo laws those base classes are called *Burrunfunken*, p. 111, and they are subdivided

divided into as many separate classes as there are trades or occupations to be exercised by them. In this work they are said to be twenty nine, p. 101, La Croze says, p. 295, they were in all ninety eight.

The employments of each of these tribes are delineated at length in the Institutes of Menu, and I shall mention a few as a specimen of the rest. "From a bramin and a Sudra woman is born a *Nishada*. From a Sudra on women of the three higher classes are born three different tribes, that by one of the military class a *Cshattri*, by a bramin woman a *Chandala*. These are called the lowest of mortals. A son of a Nishada by a woman of the Sudra class is a *Puccasa*. From a Cshatriya by a Sudra woman comes an *Ugra*. From a Cshattri by an Ugra woman comes a *Suapaca*. From a Chandala by a Puccasi woman is born a *Sopaca*, who lives by punishing criminals condemned by the king, a sinful wretch ever despised by the virtuous," p. 294. "A Nishadi woman by a Chandala produces a son called *Antyavasyin*, employed in places for burning the dead, contemned even by the contemptible," ib.

We have seen that, according to the pundits who compiled the Code of Gentoo laws, different races of men may spring from a mixture of the inhabitants of the different deeps, or continents before mentioned.

mentioned. From a man of *Shakud deep*, cast upon Jumboo deep, came, they say, the tribe *Deiool*. They then add, p. 105. From a man of *Deiool*, and a woman of *bice*, was derived the tribe of *Gung*, or astronomers, and others called *Muluah*, which eat forbidden food. These sprung from the members of the tyrant *Bein*, who behaved so ill that the bramins put him to death. This done, these pundits proceed to say, they rubbed his two hands, and from his right hand produced a son named *Perthoo*, skilled in the art of war, and also a pundit in the *Shaster*, in form and shape like a dew-tah, and from his left hand they raised a daughter, who was married to *Perthoo*, and under them every thing flourished. All this is delivered with the greatest gravity in their account of the creation.

These four casts are so distinguished by their outward appearance that they cannot be mistaken. They not only dress in a different manner, but have different staves for walking with, being made of different kinds of wood, and of different lengths. (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 23.) They also use different girdles to bind their garments about them.

The three higher classes are called *twice born*, but the fourth only *once born*, that is, according to the *Institutes of Menu*, they have no *second birth from the Gayatri*, which is a form of prayer, or as it is sometimes called, of incantation, from the *Veda's*,  
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and which is not to be used by the Sudras. In the farther explanation of this circumstance it is said (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 36.) "Let a man consider that as a mere human birth which his parents gave him, but that birth which he knows the whole Veda procures for him, is the true birth. This birth is exempt from age, and death." That is, I suppose, the privilege obtained by it extends beyond this life. "The first birth is from the natural mother, the second from the ligation of the zone, the third from the performance of sacrifice. Such are the births of him who is twice born according to the Veda," p. 38. It should seem, therefore, that some may be said to be not only *twice*, but even *thrice* born, tho' the phrase commonly used in this work is *twice born*.

Notwithstanding this distinction of the casts, there are cases in which the highest may sink to the lowest, and the lowest may rise to the highest, at least in another life. Thus "by selling flesh meat, *lacscha*, or salt, a bramin immediately sinks low. By selling milk three days he falls to a level with a sudra. (*Institutes of Menu* p. 300.) On the other hand, "by the force of extreme devotion, and exalted fathers, all the classes may rise in time to a high birth; as by the reverse all may sink to the lowest state, in every age among mortals in this inferior world," p. 249. "Desertion of life without  
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reward, for the sake of preserving a priest, or a cow, may cause the beatitude of those base born tribes." p. 296.

"Servile attendance on a bramin learned in the Veda, chiefly on such as keep house, and are famed for virtue, is the highest duty of a Sudra, and leads him to future beatitude. Pure in mind and body, serving the three higher classes, mild in speech, never arrogant, ever seeking refuge in bramin's principally, he may attain the most eminent class in another transmigration," ib. p. 288.

These tribes, says Mr. Dow, p. 32, do not intermarry, eat, drink, or in any manner associate with one another, except when they worship at the temple of Jagernaut in Orissa, where it is held a crime to make any distinction.

Much less will the Hindoos use any thing in common with persons of other nations. They regard them all with the greatest abhorrence, and no necessity will make them eat or drink with them. The Egyptians had the same superstitious ideas. We see in the scriptures that they did not eat even with Joseph, tho' he was the prime minister in the country, or with any who are there called *Shepherds*. Herodotus says that no Egyptian, man or woman, will use any thing belonging to a Greek, or taste flesh cut with their knives, lib. 2, sec. 41.

SECTION

SECTION X.

*Of the Bramins.*

THE prerogatives of the Hindoo bramins deserve a particular consideration, as there is not in all history another example of such respect being claimed, or obtained, by any class of men whatever. In the Preface to the Code of Gentoo laws, p. 10, it is justly observed, that "the people of Hindostan pay the bramins a degree of respect little short of idolatry, in return for the advantages supposed to be derived from their studies."

Mr. Holwell says the bramins are denominated from *Bramah*, a title appropriated to the promulger of the Shaftah, and which implies the spirituality and divinity of his mission and doctrines. Hence he says it is that his successors assumed the name of *bramins*, supposing themselves to inherit the same divine Spirit, vol. 2, p. 7.

In the Institutes of Menu we read that "from priority of birth and superiority of origin, from a more exact knowledge of the scriptures, and from a distinction in the sacrificial cord, a bramin is lord of all the classes p. 289. From his high birth alone a bramin is an object of veneration even to the deities. His declarations to mankind are decisive evidence, and the Veda itself confers on  
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him this character" p. 319. Much, however, of the dignity which the bramins may attain depends upon their acquirements. "A priest who has gone thro' the whole Veda is equal to the sovereign of all the world," p. 277.

Yet great as is the respect with which the bramins are treated, it is not more than they are intitled to, if they be of so much importance as is pretended. According to the Institutes of Menu the prosperity of the state, and even that of the world, depends upon them. "That kingdom," it is there said, p. 179, "in which learned bramins are afflicted with hunger, will in a short time be afflicted with famine. By the religious duties which such bramins perform every day, under the full protection of the sovereign, the life, wealth, and dominion, of his protectors shall be greatly increased," ib. But this is not all. "The Being who exists of himself produced the bramin from his own mouth, that having performed holy rites, he might present clarified butter to the gods, and cakes of rice to the progenitors of mankind, for the preservation of this world. What created being then can surpass him with whose mouth the gods of the firmament continually feast on clarified butter, and the manes of ancestors on hallowed cakes." p. 13.

But the following passages from this Hindoo work

work will perhaps give us a still higher idea of the power and importance of the order of bramins. "Let not the king, tho' in the greatest distress, provoke the bramins to anger. For they, once enraged, could immediately, by sacrifices and imprecations, destroy him, with his troops, elephants, horses, and cars. Who, without perishing, could provoke those holy men, by whom" (i. e. by whose ancestors under Brahma) "the all devouring fire was created, the sea with waters not drinkable, and the moon with its wane and increase? What prince could gain wealth by oppressing those who, if angry, could frame other worlds, could give being to new gods, and mortals? p. 285. What man desirous of life would injure those by the aid of whom" (that is by whose oblations) "worlds and gods perpetually subsist, those who are rich in the learning of the Veda? A Bramin, whether learned or ignorant, is a powerful divinity; even as fire is a powerful divinity, whether consecrated or popular. Even in places for burning the dead the bright fire is undefiled, and when presented with clarified butter blazes again with extreme splendour. Thus, tho' bramins employ themselves in all sorts of mean occupation, they must invariably be honoured, for they are something transcendently divine." p. 286.

Such being the natural dignity of this order of men,



men, we do not wonder that, according to these Institutes, there is no greater merit than that of shewing favour to bramins, and no greater crime than that of injuring them. "Let every man, according to his ability, give wealth to the bramins, detached from the world, and learned in the scriptures. Such a giver shall attain heaven even in this life, p. 308. By entertaining one learned man at an oblation of the gods, and at that of ancestors, he gains more exalted fruit than by feeding a multitude who know not the holy texts, p. 68. An oblation in the mouth or hand of a bramin is better than offerings to the holy fire. It never drops, it never dries; it is never consumed. A gift to one not a bramin produces fruit of a middle standard, to one who calls himself a bramin double, but to a well read bramin a hundred thousand fold, to one who has read all the Veda's infinite," p. 169.

The Hindoos think that in many cases the merit of one person may be transferred to another, as we have seen on a former occasion; and according to the Institutes of Menu, p. 64. "A bramin coming as a guest, and not received with full honor, takes to himself the reward of all the housekeeper's former virtue, even tho' he had been so temperate as to live on the gleanings of the harvest, and so pious as to make oblations on five distinct fires."

Notwithstanding this high distinction, the bramin

min does not in some respects, stand higher than a cow. For the same Institutes say, p. 318. "For the preservation of a cow, or a bramin, let a man instantly abandon life; since the preserver of a cow, or of a bramin, atones for the crime of killing a priest. By attempting at least three times forcibly to recover from robbers the property of a bramin, or by recovering it in one of his attacks, or even by losing his life in the attempt, he atones for his crime."

We may form some idea of the value of these services when we are told in the same Institutes, p. 238, that "no greater crime is known on earth than that of killing a bramin," and "that a king must not even form in his mind the idea of killing a priest." We find the same in the Code of Gentoo laws, p. 283, where it is added, that "a magistrate must not even cut off his limb." "For striking a bramineven with a blade of grass, or tying him by the neck with a cloth, or overpowering him in argument, the offender must sooth him by falling prostrate." (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 335.) An atonement is appointed for killing a priest without malice, but for killing him with malice there is no expiation. "If the case be atrocious, the murderer must actually die, in the flames, or in battle," p. 319.

In the Institutes of Menu kings are particularly instructed how to behave to the bramins, and the following

lowing is a specimen of their instructions on this head. "Having appointed a bramin a maintenance, let the king protect him on all sides. For he gains from the bramin whom he protects a sixth part of the reward of his virtue, p. 340. Let the king, having risen at an early dawn, respectfully attend to the bramins, learn in the three Vedas, and in the study of Ethics, and by their decision let him abide, p. 163. Constantly must he shew respect to the bramins. To one learned bramin, distinguished among them all, let the king impart his momentous councils. To him with full confidence let him intrust all his transactions, p. 160. For the full discharge of his duty let him give the bramins both legal enjoyments and moderate wealth, p. 169. Lastly, should a king be near his end, thro' some incurable disease, he must bestow on the priests all his riches, accumulated from legal fines," p. 286.

Some of the prerogatives of the bramins are of a singular nature, giving them advantages which have no relation to their office. "A learned bramin having found a treasure formerly hidden may take it without any deduction, since he is lord of all; but of those anciently repositied under ground which any other subject, or the king, has discovered, the king may lay up half in his treasure, having given half to the bramins. (*Institutes of Menu*, p.

194.) "If a widow should give all her property to the bramins for religious purposes, the gift is valid, but the act is improper, and the woman is blameable." (*Preface to the Gentoo laws*, p. 55.) A bramin is not required to pay so much for interest of money, as any of the other classes, *ib.* p. 2.

The following article is particularly curious, and shews how very defective are the fundamental principles of the Hindoo jurisprudence and morality. "If a man thro' impulse of lust tell lies to a woman, or if his own life would otherwise be lost, or all the goods of his house spoiled, or if it be for the service of a bramin; in such affairs falsehood is allowable," p. 115.

Sacred as is the character of a bramin among the Hindoos, it is in one respect inferior to that of the Highpriest of the Parfi's. For according to Mr. Lord, p. 186, he must not so much as touch, not only a stranger, but even a layman of his own religion.

Holy and venerable as these bramins are, it is not, however, pretended that they are impeccable. What then is to be done if they offend? Certainly, in them a breach of the law is a greater crime than in any other order of men, who have less knowledge, and more temptation. But the Hindoo lawgivers were of a different opinion. For  
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in all cases the punishments of bramins, are lighter than those of other men; and whatever they do, their lives, their limbs, their liberty, and even their property cannot be touched, as we see in the following laws respecting them:

"Never let the king slay a bramin, tho' convicted of all possible crimes: Let him banish the offender from the realm, but with all his property secure, and his body unhurt. (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 238.) Menu, son of the self existent, has named ten places of punishment, which are appropriated to the three lowest classes, but a bramin must depart from the realm unhurt in any of them, the parts of generation, the belly, the tongue, the two hands, the two feet, the eye, the nose, both ears, the property, and in a capital case the whole body. Let a just prince banish men of the three lower classes, if they give false evidence, having first levied the fine, but a bramin let him only banish," p. 201. \* Ignominious torture is, however

\* Mr. Dow, therefore, must be mistaken when he says, p. 36, "The bramins have not exempted themselves from the punishment of death when guilty of crimes. This," he says, "is one of the numerous fables which modern travellers import from the East." Plutarch in his *Roman Questions*, says, "Other priests might be condemned, but no augur could be removed from his office, tho' convicted of the greatest crimes."

ever, ordained instead of capital punishment for an adulterer of the priestly class; whereas the punishment of the other classes in the same case may extend to the loss of life," *ib.* p. 237. "The property of a bramin shall never be taken by escheat by the king. This is a fixed law, but the wealth of the other classes, on failure of all heirs, the king may take," p. 270.

"If a bramin has killed a man of the sacerdotal class without malice, the slayer, being superior to the slain in good qualities, he must himself make a hut in a forest, and dwell in it twelve whole years, subsisting on alms, for the purification of his soul, placing near him, as a token of his crime, the skull of the slain, or if not, any human skull. The time of penance for the three lower classes must be twenty four, thirty six, and forty eight years. If the slayer be of the military class, he may voluntarily expose himself as a mark to archers, or he may cast himself headlong thrice, or even till he dies, into a blazing fire," *ib.* p. 317.

Bramins are supposed to be capable of the most unnatural vices; but even in such cases they are to suffer less than offenders of the lower classes in the same way. "If a bramin should copulate with a cow, the magistrate shall fine him eighty gold crowns, if a cheteree, or a bice, he shall fine him

five hundred pieces of couries, if he be a Sooder, he shall be put to death," (*Gentoo Laws*, p. 248.)

We find however, the following exception in favour of reason and justice. "The fine of a Sooder for theft shall be eight fold, that of a vaisya sixteen fold, that of a cheteree thirty two, and that of bramin sixty four, or a hundred fold complete, or even twice sixty four; each of them knowing the nature of the offence," (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 232.)

The ancient Germans appear to have had a high idea of the sacredness of their priests. According to Tacitus, the power of inflicting pains and penalties, and of striking and binding the criminal, was vested in the priests alone; and these Germans, tho' so haughty, would submit to blows, and even to death itself, from the hand of the pontiff, whom they considered as the instrument of an angry deity, (*Northern Antiquities*, vol. 1, p. 142.)

In proportion to this excessive elevation of the bramin, is the equally unnatural degradation and depression of the poor *Sudra*. Indeed, that any part of the human species should submit to such a state is most extraordinary. All the following are among the laws of Menu relating to them.

"A man of the servile class, whether bought or unbought, a bramin may compel to perform several

ral duties. Such a man was created by the self-existent for the purpose of serving bramins, p. 242. A Sudra, tho' emancipated by his master, is not released from a state of servitude. For of a state which is natural to him, by whom can he be divested? ib. For a Sudra is ordained a wife of his own class, and no other, p. 265. No superfluous collection of wealth shall be made by a Sudra, even tho' he have power to make it. Since a servile man, who has amassed riches, becomes proud, and gives pain even to the bramins," p. 306.

The little value that is set on the life of a Sudra may be seen in the following law. "If a person kill by design a cat, an ichnuomon, the bird chasha, or a frog, a dog, a lizard, an owl, or a crow, he must perform the penance for the death of a Sudra," (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 325.)

This class of men must be supposed to be as odious to the gods as they are to men, and no doubt from an opinion of their being in a state of punishment for offences committed in a prior state. For they say "the whole territory that is inhabited by a number of Sudra's, overwhelmed with atheists, and deprived of bramins, must speedily perish, afflicted with death and disease," p. 192.)

The Hindoo system, however, supposes that  
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even a Sudra may have merit, and become intitled to reward. For we read that "if a Sudra, without injuring another man, perform the lawful acts of the twice born, without being censured, he gains exaltation in this world and the next," (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 305.) He has likewise the privilege of living where he pleases. A certain district is particularly described in the *Institutes of Menu*, in which persons of the three highest classes must dwell; but "a Sudra," it is said, p. 20, "distressed for subsistence, may sojourn wherever he pleases."

But the superiority of the bramin to the Sudra will appear in the strongest light in the laws and regulations which at the same time relate to them both. I select the following with this view. "Attendance on a bramin is pronounced the best work for a Sudra. Whatever else he may perform will comparatively avail him nothing, (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 305.) A once born man who insults a twice born one with gross invective ought to have his tongue slit; for he sprung from the lowest part of Brahma. If he mentions their names and classes with contumely, as if he say *O devadatta*, thou refuse of bramins, an iron style ten fingers long shall be thrust red hot into his mouth. Should he thro' pride give instruction to priests concerning their duty, let the king order some hot oil to be dropped

dropped into his mouth, and his ear, *ib.* p. 224. If a Sudra sits on the carpet of a bramin, the magistrate, having thrust a red hot iron into his buttock, and branded him, shall banish him the kingdom, or else he shall cut off his buttock, (*Gentoo Laws*, p. 207.) If a Sudra, out of pride, shall spit upon a bramin, the magistrate shall cut off his lip; if he piss upon him, he shall cut off his penis, if he evacuate backwards his wind upon him, he shall cut off his fundament. If he pluck a bramin by the ear, or the beard, or take hold of his neck, he shall cut off both his hands," p. 208. But what follows is even more than this. For "if a Sudra give much and frequent molestation to a bramin, the magistrate shall put him to death," p. 262. A bramin, tho' under obligation to live on alms, must not apply to a Sudra. "Let no bramin beg a gift from a Sudra, for if he perform a sacrifice after such begging, he shall in the next life be born a Chandala," (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 810.)

Low, however, as is the Sudra, all those who have had the misfortune to be born in the Burrunkun classes are lower still, as the following account will shew. "The abode of the Chandala, and Suapaca, must be out of the town. They must not have the use of an entire vessel, their sole wealth must be dogs and asses, *ib.* p. 295. Their clothes must be the mantles of the deceased, their dishes  
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for food broken pots, their ornaments rusty iron. Continually must they roam from place to place. Let no man who regards his duty, religious or civil, hold any intercourse with them. Let their connections be confined to themselves, and their marriages only between equals," *ib.* "Let food be given them in pottsherds, but not by the hands of the giver, and let them not walk by night in a city or town. By day they may walk about for the purpose of work, distinguished by the king's badges, and they shall carry out the corpses of every one who dies without kindred. Such is the fixed rule. They shall always kill those who are to be slain by the sentence of the law, and by royal warrant, and let them take the clothes of the slain, and their ornaments," *ib.* p. 296.

It will always remain a problem not easy to be solved how one part of the same community can keep another part of it in such a wretched state of degradation and servitude, even supposing, what is not said to have been the case here, that the Sudra's were originally prisoners taken in war. For the effect of that circumstance would cease in a few generations. But it may be accounted for, in some measure, from the deplorable state of ignorance in which this degraded order of men is studiously kept. Such legal provisions for perpetual ignorance are altogether unknown in any other country. It fills

one with horror to read of some of them, and yet Mr. Langles, the encomiast of this system, commends even this part of it. He calls the bramins "faithful guardians of the sacred trust confided to them. They dispose of it," he says, p. 9, "with the greatest discretion, teaching the common people what they must know in order to the practice of virtue, and to enjoy the happiness inseparable from a life free from reproach." Let us now hear what this discretion is, and whether the object of it be to serve themselves, or the common people.

The Institutes of Menu say, p. 289, "Let the three twice born classes, remaining firm in their several duties, carefully read the Veda, but a bramin must explain it to them, not a man of the other two classes. This code of law should be studied with extreme care by a learned bramin, and fully explained to his disciples, but by no other man," p. 14.

The extreme caution with which this rule is observed we see in the conduct of the learned bramin with respect to Sir. William Jones. The bramin who read to him the Institutes of Menu, the work out of which I have made so many extracts, and out of which I shall give many more, requested most earnestly that his name might be concealed; nor would he read it on any consideration on a forbidden day of the moon, or without the



the ceremonies prescribed for a lecture on the Veda. What those are will be seen in their place. When the chief magistrate of Benares endeavoured, at the request of Sir William, to procure a Persian translation of it, the pundits of his court positively and unanimously refused to assist in the work (*Preface*, p. 16.) But to proceed with the Institutes of Menu on this head.

"A bramin must never read the Veda in the presence of a Sudra, p. 101, Let him not give advice to a Sudra, nor what remains from his table, nor clarified butter of which part has been offered to the Gods, nor let him give spiritual council to such a man, nor inform him personally of the legal expiation of his sin. p. 99. Surely he who declares the law to a servile man, and he who instructs him in the mode of expiating sin," (except, it is added by sir William Jones, by the intervention of a priest) "sinks with that very man into the hell called *Ajamorita*," *ib.*

These are the restrictions on the part of the bramin. Let us now see what is the consequence to the too curious and inquisitive Sudra, who should pry into these mysteries, from the Code of Gentoo laws. "If a man of the Soudre read the beads of the Shaster, or the Pouran to a bramin, let the magistrate heat some bitter oil, and pour it into the forefaid Soudre's mouth. If the Soudre listen to  
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the beids of the Shafter, then the oil, heated as before, shall be poured into his ear, and *argeez*, and wax shall be melted together, and the orifices of his ears shall be stopped up therewith. This ordinance serves also for the Argol tribe." But even this is not all, or the worst, that may happen to the poor Sudra, who should endeavour to gather some of the crumbs that fall from the bramin's table, to which it seems, in any sense of the words, he has no right. "If a Sooder man always performs worship and the jug, the magistrate shall put him to death, or fine him two hundred *astruphies*, p. 263. If he get by heart the beids of the Shafter, the magistrate shall put him to death," p. 261.

Other heathen nations had similar illiberal restrictions. "The Egyptian priests concealed their knowledge in tales and romantic relations, dark hints, and resemblances of truth. (*Plutarch de Iside, &c.*) Pythagoras learned of them to adopt a symbolical and mysterious way of teaching, concealing his sentiments in dark riddles, as Do not eat in a chariot, Do not sit on a measure, Do not plant a palm tree, Stir not the fire with a knife within the house," ib.

The Druids made a great mystery of their knowledge. They committed nothing to writing, tho' Cæsar says they had the use of letters,

and they gave no instruction but in their sacred groves.

Such is the boasted *discretion* with which these *venerable teachers* dispensed knowledge to the lower classes of their fellow citizens. But how different in this respect were the institutions of Moses, which are, notwithstanding, said to be borrowed from them. He made no distinction of *casts*, confining a man to the profession of his father, whether it suited him or not, and elevating some tribes to the degradation of others. In the Hebrew system there was, indeed, an hereditary priesthood, but in that one circumstance the resemblance terminates. The tribe to which the priesthood belonged, so far from being rich, was excluded from a share in the division of the land, and confined to certain cities with a small space round them for gardens, so that they were generally objects of charity, especially the common Levites; and their case is frequently mentioned together with that of the stranger, the fatherless, and widow, who were of course poor and destitute.

The principal part of the subsistence of the Levites was the tythes, with respect to which they were, of course, at the mercy of their countrymen; and the payment of these tythes depended upon the attachment of the people to the law which enjoined the payment of them. Consequently, it  
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operated as an obligation on the priests and Levites to instruct the people in the law, and preserve them in their adherence to it, which was declared to be their proper business. Accordingly, there is not in all their history one example of a Hebrew priest attaining much wealth, or political influence, in the country, before the Babylonish captivity. And from the leaning which the people in general had to other religions, the priests of Baal were generally more popular than they. As to the criminal law, it was the very same to the priests and all the people.

So far were the priests and Levites from being enjoined to keep the people in ignorance, that certain times were expressly appointed on which they were to give them instruction with respect to the law; and therefore Moses, in blessing each of the twelve tribes, says of the Levites, Deut. xxxiii, 10. *They shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law.* Every seven years they were obliged to read over the whole of the law at the feast of tabernacles, which they might easily do to the people assembled in groups for the purpose.

But besides this express provision for the instruction of the people, they were all, without exception, earnestly exhorted to study it continually, and teach it to their children, Deut. vi, 6. *These words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart,*



*heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.*

There was no provision for a king in the original constitution of the Hebrew government, and the nation was solemnly warned against adopting that form of government; yet Moses, foreseeing that they would have kings, appointed that every king should, with his own hand write a copy of the law; it being of particular consequence that he who was to administer the laws should be well acquainted with them. Certainly, then, if the people in general were ignorant of their institutions, or neglected to observe them, the fault was not in the system itself.

## SECTION

SECTION XI.

*Of the Prerogatives of the Kings.*

IT is certainly no particular objection to the system of the Hindoos that their princes were arbitrary; because, excepting the single case of the Hebrews, all the governments in the East ever have been so; the princes appointing whom they pleased for their advisers or assistants, and taking their advice, and employing them, as they thought proper. But it is, on the other hand, no recommendation of the system, that their laws, supposed to come immediately from the Supreme Being himself, favour that system, and that such an idea is given of them as must tend to feed the pride of kings, encourage them to oppress their subjects, and disturb the peace of their neighbours. Yet such is the necessary inference from the accounts of the power of kings and magistrates in their solemn codes.

“The Magistrates,” say the pundits who compiled the Code of Gentoo laws, p. 110, “must be looked upon in the light of *dewtah*’s. In truth, the magistrate is a *dewtah* in a human form, born in this world.” According to the Institutes of Menu, kings have a divine origin, separate from that of the rest

rest of mankind. "Kings," they say, p. 159, "are formed of particles drawn from the substance of Indra, Pavana, Yama, Surya, of Agni, and Varuna, of Chandra, and Cuvera. And since a king was composed of particles drawn from these chief guardian deities, he consequently surpasses all mortals in glory : Like the sun, he burns eyes and hearts, nor can any human creature on earth even gaze on him. He is fire and air, both sun and moon, the god of criminal justice, the genius of wealth, the regent of waters, the lord of the firmament. A king, even tho' a child, must not be treated lightly from the idea that he is a mere mortal. No, he is a powerful divinity, who appears in a human shape. Fire burns only one person who carelessly goes too near it, but the fire of a king in wrath burns a whole family, with all their cattle and goods. He, sure, must be the perfect essence of majesty, by whose favour abundance rises on her lotos, in whose valour dwells conquest, in whose anger death."

The king is exhorted to act as the father of his people, p. 169, but he may assume an opposite character if he pleases. He is directed to appoint "seven or eight ministers," p. 166, "and having asked their opinions, to do what is most beneficial for him in public affairs." But they could only advise. They had no power of controul. The king

king is indeed, promised all prosperity if he acquit himself well, but they are such promises as the Supreme Being only can make good. Treating of good princes, it is said, p. 277, that "in their dominions children are born in due season, and enjoy long lives. There the grain of husbandmen rises abundantly. There no younglings die, nor is one deformed animal born." If, however, this be the criterion of a well governed kingdom, few, I apprehend, will be found to be so.

In like manner, every thing with which a bad prince is threatened is in the power of God only. "That king who thro' weakness of intellect oppresses his people will, together with his family, be deprived both of his kingdom and his life, p. 173. A king addicted to the vices arising from anger may even lose his life," p. 164. But this is to be understood, according to the translator's interlineation, of the effects of public resentment, and not from any regular power of controul, or of punishment.

The least interruption given to the pleasures of a prince exposes the offender to a most unreasonable punishment. "In any place," say the Gentoo laws, "where the magistrate is playing with any person at Choperbazee, or tables, or any other such kind of game; in that case, if any person, without permission of the magistrate, interpose with his hand



hand, or by speaking, the magistrate shall put him to death," p. 269.

The emolument which a prince may derive from his office, independent of any exceeding, which would be called oppression, seems according to the Institutes of Menu, to be very exorbitant. "By low handicraftsmen, artificers and servile men, who support themselves by labour, the king may cause work to be done for a day in each month," p. 176. Let the king take a twentieth part of the profit on sales, p. 240. Of cattle, of gems, of gold, and silver, a fiftieth part may be taken by the king; of grain an eighth part, a sixth, or a twelfth, according to the difference of soil, and the labour necessary to cultivate it. He may also take a sixth part of the annual increase of trees, flesh meet, honey, clarified butter, perfumery, medical substances, liquids, flowers, roots, and fruits, of garden leaves, pot herbs, grass, utensils made of leather, or cane, earthen pots, and all things made of stone," p. 175. "Of the reward for what every subject reads in the Veda, for what he sacrifices, for what he gives in charity, for what he performs in worship, the king justly takes a fifth part in consequence of protection," p. 228. This is the more extraordinary, as it must be contributed by the bramins.

In return, however, for this, besides the favour that the prince is requested to shew to the bramins,

as mentioned before, they share with him in many of the fines, and in some cases the king himself is subject to a fine, tho' it is not said who is to exact it. "Where another man of low birth shall be fined one pana, the king shall be fined a thousand; and he shall give the fine to the priests, or cast it into the river. This is a sacred rule," p. 232. "Let no virtuous prince appropriate the wealth of a criminal in the highest degree. Having thrown such a fine into the waters, let him offer it to Baruna, or let him bestow it on some priest eminent for learning in the scripture," p. 277.

Such is the conduct prescribed to the prince with respect to his own subjects. With regard to his neighbours, he is encouraged to get all he can from them, in order to enlarge his own territories, tho' when he has acquired new subjects he is advised to govern them well. Mr. Langles, the great encomiast of this system, quotes with approbation from a Hindoo treatise on the art of government the following passage which would have been highly pleasing to Alexander the Great, Jenghis Kan, or Tamerlane. "He draws a tribute from those that are weaker than himself. He endeavours to sow dissention among the troops of those sovereigns whose power gives him umbrage, and may become fatal to him. Tho' the prince whose territories border on his seem to be his friend, he

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ought not to have the least confidence in him."

P. 54.

The Institutes of Menu hold the same language.

"By a king whose forces are always ready for action the whole world may be kept in awe. Let him then by forces always ready make all creatures living his own, p. 172. Thus fully performing all duties required by the law, let a king seek" (*justly*, as Sir William Jones adds) "to possess regions yet unpossessed, and when they are in his possession, let him govern them well," p. 278. But who is to controul him if he do not.

Mr. Langles himself will hardly say that the Hebrew system was borrowed from this, or from any other form of government subsisting in the time of Moses. According to his constitution, there was not to be any king in Israel. The nation was to be governed ultimately by God, to whom they were directed to have recourse in all cases of great emergency, and ordinarily by a council of elders, or heads of the twelve tribes, their resolves being afterwards confirmed by the whole congregation, in what manner assembled we cannot tell; so that, in fact, the Hebrew form of government consisted of three estates. When the heads of the tribes were assembled, it is probable that the High-priest presided, tho' this does not appear to have been necessary. The priests, as a body, were too  
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much dispersed to be able to combine for any political purpose, nor does it appear that they ever attempted any thing of the kind, or that they were regarded with jealousy on that account. At one time indeed, the Highpriest protected the infant heir of the crown from the attempts of the queen mother to take his life; but as soon as he was of age he was made king.

When the people, notwithstanding the earnest remonstrance of Samuel, by the direction of God himself, against their adopting a kingly government, were resolved to be like their neighbours, in having a king, he was appointed by God, and not by the priests. Before this change in the form of their government the Israelites were governed on all extraordinary occasions never by any priest, but always by a civil judge, whose office, if he acquitted himself well, seems in general to have been for life; but the ordinary administration of affairs did not require his interposition. In this respect the constitution of the Hebrews resembled that of the Northern nations of Europe, as described by Tacitus. No civil power, however, was hereditary.

## SECTION



## SECTION XII.

*Of the Situation of Women among the Hindoos.*

I RATHER wonder that the respect which all Frenchmen profess to have for the *female sex* should not have lowered Mr. Langles's high opinion of the Hindoo institutions. For nothing can be more humiliating than the light in which women are always represented in them. He himself says, p. 179, that according to the Veda's the souls of women, as well as those of all individuals of the inferior casts, are condemned to continual transmigrations, till they are regenerated in the bodies of men.

If the general character of women were such as the Hindoo writings exhibit, there is no supposition that can be entertained concerning them too unfavourable, nor any treatment of them too bad. In the *Hitopades*, translated by Mr. Langles, it is said that "faithlessness, violence, falsehood, extreme avarice, a total want of good qualities, and impurity, are vices natural to the female sex," p. 95. And both the Institutes of Menu, and the Code of Gentoo laws, may be quoted as better authorities in support of the same opprobrious character,  
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but certainly not the writings of Moses. "It is," say the Institutes, p. 44, "the nature of women in this world to cause the seduction of men, for which reason the wise are never unguarded in the company of females."

The same character is given more at large in the following passage. "Thro' their passion for men, their mutable temper, their want of settled affection, and their perverse nature, let them be guarded in this world ever so well, they soon become alienated from their husbands. Yet should their husbands be diligently careful in guarding them, tho' they well know the disposition with which the Lord of the creation formed them. Menu allotted to such women a love of their bed, of their seat, and of ornaments, impure appetites, wrath, weak flexibility, desire of mischief, and bad conduct. Women have no business with the texts of the Veda. Thus is the law fully settled. Having therefore no evidence of law, and no knowledge of expiatory texts, sinful women must be as foul as falsehood itself, and this is a fixed rule. To this effect many texts which may shew their true disposition are chaunted in the Veda's," p. 247.

The Gentoo laws, compiled by the learned pundits of Hindostan, are in perfect unison with these Institutes of Menu. Of Women they say, p. 240, something so gross, that I cannot copy it. What follows

follows is bad enough. "Women have six qualities, the first an incredible desire for jewels and fine furniture, handsome clothes, and nice victuals, the second immoderate lust, the third violent anger, the fourth deep resentment, i. e. no person knows the sentiments concealed in their hearts, the fifth another person's good appears evil in their eyes, the sixth they commit bad actions."

The souls of women must certainly have been very much depraved in a prior state to correspond to their character in this world. And this is sufficiently intimated in the *Institutes of Menu*. Treating of the duties of a prince they say, p. 178, "Since those who are disgraced in this life by reason of their sins formerly committed are apt to betray secret councils, so are talking birds, and so above all are women. Them he must for this reason remove." And yet according to Mr. Holwell, women are supposed to be animated by the most benignant and least culpable of the apostate debtah, or angels, vol. 2, p. 75.

Such being in the opinion of the Hindoo lawgivers, the natural character of women, it is no wonder that little regard is paid to their evidence in courts of justice. "A man untainted with covetousness," say the *Institutes of Menu*, p. 199, may be a sole witness," and will have more weight than

than many women; because the female understanding is apt to waver."

Neither can we be surprized that the birth of a female is no cause of rejoicing in a Hindoo family. "If a wife bear only daughters," say the Gentoo laws, p. 252, "the husband may cease to cohabit with her." In this case, according to the Institutes of Menu, a man after waiting eleven years, may marry another. The same law says that "if a wife speak unkindly to her husband she may be superseded by another without delay," p. 255.

It is in perfect agreement with their ideas of the female character that women must always be under the absolute controul of men. "A woman," say the Institutes of Menu, "is never fit for independence, p. 245. A woman must never seek independence, p. 142. By a girl, or a young woman, or by a woman advanced in years, nothing must be done, even in her own dwelling, according to her mere pleasure," p. 141. "A man both day and night must keep his wife in subjection, that she by no means be mistress of her own actions. If the wife have her own free will, notwithstanding she be sprung from a superior cast, she yet will behave amiss," (*Gentoo laws*, p. 249.)

The subjection of a wife to her husband has no bounds. "A faithful wife, who wishes to attain  
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in heaven the mansion of her husband, must do nothing unkind to him, be he living or dead. A wife must always rise before her husband, but never eat with him, (*Gentoo laws*, 251.) She must not dress, or take any amusement in his absence, p. 253. Let her macerate her body by living voluntarily on pure flowers, roots and fruits, but let her not, when her lord is deceased, even pronounce the name of another man," (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 143.) "Tho' inobservant of private duties, or enamoured of another woman, or devoid of good qualities, yet a husband must be constantly revered as a god by a virtuous wife," p. 142. In this case surely, she might be allowed a mansion in heaven, equal to that of her husband; but much more than this is required if she would make sure of so great a happiness, even be burned alive with his corpse. Whether she do this or not, she must not on any account marry again. "The marriage of a widow," say the *Institutes of Menu*, p. 253, "is never named in the text concerning marriage. This practice, fit only for cattle, is reprehended by the learned bramins."

In one case, however, a woman is allowed the liberty of disposing of herself. "Three years let a damsel wait, tho' she be marriageable, but after that term, let her chuse for herself, a bridegroom of equal rank." (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 256.)

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Tho' obedience be so rigorously required of a wife, it is not to go unrewarded. "She who deserts not her lord, but keeps in subjection to him in her speech and her body, shall attain his mansion in heaven, and by the virtuous in the world be called *Sadheri*, good and faithful. (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 249.) But if a wife be disloyal to her husband, she incurs disgrace in this life, and will be born in the next from the womb of a Shakal, or be tormented with horrible diseases which punish vice," *ib.*

When women are considered in this degrading light, and treated in this disrespectful manner, especially as not qualified to read their sacred books, it is no wonder that they are in general very ignorant, and perhaps undeserving of the confidence that is never reposed in them. There are few women it is said that can either read or write, (*Sketches relating to the history, &c. of the Hindoos*, vol. 2, p. 47.)

How much more consonant to reason is the doctrine of our scriptures concerning the two sexes. According to them the man has no advantage besides that superiority which must be given to one of them. In every other respect they are considered, and treated, as perfectly equal. They have the same moral duties, and the same future reward in prospect, in a state in which all distinction of

sex will cease, where there will be *no marrying or giving in marriage, but all will be alike, as the angels of God in heaven*, Mat. xxii, 30. As to the natural or moral disposition, there is no intimation in the scriptures, or the writings of Moses, of women being at all inferior to men. Both have their natural passions, but neither of them are considered as more disposed to criminal indulgence than the other. And with respect to examples, there are virtuous and excellent ones of women as well as of men. If some of the most shining characters be those of men, so are also some of the worst. And women being naturally more domestic, and coming less into public life, their characters and conduct are not in general so conspicuous, and of course not so much noticed in history as those of men.

## SECTION

SECTION XIII.

*Of the Devotion of the Hindoos.*

THERE is, no doubt, something sublime, tho' extravagant and absurd, in the professed object of the Hindoo devotion, which is the detachment of the soul from every thing corporeal, and its union to the Supreme Being, from which it had its origin; and it is possible that, by the force of imagination, some persons may believe that they have attained to this exalted state. According to the Institutes of Menu, p. 357, "he who frequently performs interested rites attains to an equal station with the regents of the lower heavens; but he who frequently performs disinterested acts of religion becomes for ever exempt from the body, composed of the five elements. Equally perceiving the Supreme Sovereign in all beings, and all beings in the Supreme Sovereign, he sacrifices his own spirit by fixing it on the spirit of God, and approaches the nature of that sole divinity, who shines by his own effulgence."

This intense devotion the Hindoos suppose to comprise all other duties. "In this life, as well as in the next, the study of the Veda's, to acquire  
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the knowledge of God, is held the most efficacious of the six duties in procuring felicity to man. For in the knowledge and adoration of the one God, which the Veda's teach, all the rules of good conduct are fully comprised," *ib.* p. 356.

This union with God here they think leads to the final absorption into his essence hereafter. "The man who perceives in his own soul the supreme soul, present in all creatures, acquires equanimity towards them all, and shall be absorbed at last in the highest essence, even that of the Almighty himself," *ib.* p. 362.

This idea of the effect of mere contemplation to raise the soul to a state of union with God, supposed to be the highest attainment of man here or hereafter, led to all the practices of the christian monks, who in fact only copied the heathen Platonists, whose notions were derived from an Oriental source. Unhappily, this state of the extraordinary exaltation of the soul was supposed to be effected not by any thing that deserves to be called devotion, but by certain practices and ceremonies, which have no connection whatever with real devotion or virtue; by which I mean the due government of the passions, and consequently a proper conduct in life. With the Hindoos this abstraction from all sensible objects, and the union of the soul with God, ends in nothing but a stupid apathy

thy and insensibility, and that in general only affected; as it leaves them a prey to some of the worst passions of human nature.

What the Hindoos call *prayer*, and suppose to be so efficacious, is nothing that Jews or Christians signify by that term. It is no proper address to the Supreme Being, expressive of the sentiments of humility, veneration, and submission, but the mere repetition of certain words, the pronounciation of which can only be supposed to operate like a charm. Nay, we are told that the worshippers of Vichnou pretend that his name, tho' pronounced without any determinate motive, or even in contempt, cannot fail to produce a good effect. This alone, they say, has the power of effacing all crimes. (*Ezourvedam*, vol. 2, p. 88.)

The whole of the Hindoo devotion, Mr. Lord says, consists in the frequent repetition of the names and attributes of God, p. 87. The first thing in their prayer, says the translator of *Ezourvedam*, is to pronounce the word *oum*, then excluding all sensible objects, even forbearing to breathe, and to think only on God. Prayer thus made, they say, serves for the pardon of sin and purification, p. 288.

This word *oum*, or *aum*, or *om*, on the pronounciation of which so much is supposed to depend, signifies, according to Sir William Jones, Brahma,  
Vichnou,

Vichnou, and Seva, or the three powers of creation, preservation, and destruction. "It forms," he says, "a mystical word, which never escapes the lips of the pious Hindoo. They meditate on it in silence. Perhaps, he adds, it is the Egyptian *on*, commonly supposed to mean the sun, (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 1. p. 33.) and by the ancient idolaters the solar fire," *ib.* p. 61. 62. Tho' this mystical word, together with many others, of which a similar use is made, cannot but be well known, the bramins pretend to make a great secret of it. Their prayers, says the translator of Ezourvedam, consist in often repeating letters and syllables full of energy many times, and the bramins teach them to their disciples, by whispering in their ear, and recommend inviolable secrecy, vol. 2, p. 240.

This is confirmed in the Institutes of Menu, p. 343. "The primary triliteral syllable, in which the three Veda's themselves are comprized, must be kept secret as another triple Veda. He knows the Veda who knows the sense of that word." This word is often used together with the *gayatri*, which the editors of the Gentoo laws calls a *Hindoo incantation*, p. 81, the mention of which occurs so often in the Institutes of Menu, and which is supposed to have the greatest efficacy in the pretended *second birth*. "Such is the advantageous privilege of those who have a double birth, from their natural

ral mother, and from the *Gayatri*, their spiritual mother," p. 357.

The following curious circumstances must be attended to with respect to this word, and others of peculiar efficacy, as prescribed in the Institutes of Menu. Treating of the duties of the bramin, it is said, p. 27, 28; "If he have sitten on culm of *cusa*, with their points towards the East, and be purified by rubbing that holy grass on both his hands, and be farther prepared by three suppressions of breath, each equal in time to five short vowels, he then may fitly pronounce *om*. Brahma milked out from the three Veda's the letter *a*, the letter *u*, and the letter *m*, which form by their coalition the trilateral monosyllable, together with the three mysterious words *bhur*, *bhuvah*, *swar* (or *earth*, *sky*, *heaven*.) A priest who shall know the Veda, and shall pronounce to himself both morning and evening that syllable, and that holy text, preceded by the three words, shall attain the sanctity which the Veda confers. And a thrice born man who shall a thousand times repeat those three (or *om*, the *vyahritis*, and the *gayatri*) apart from the multitude, shall be released in a month even from a great offence, as a snake from the slough. The three great immutable words, preceded by the trilateral syllable, and followed by the *gayatri*, which consists of three measures, must be considered as  
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the mouth or principal part of the Veda. Whoever shall repeat day by day for three years, without negligence, that sacred text, shall hereafter approach the divine essence, move as freely as air, and assume an ethereal form. All rites ordained in the Veda, oblations to fire, and solemn sacrifices, pass away, but that which passes not away is declared to be the syllable *om*, thence called *aishara*, since it is a symbol of God, the lord of created beings."

According to other accounts, the prayers of the Hindos consist not merely in silent meditation on this word, or any others, but in the actual repeated pronunciation of it, together with some others. La Croze says, p. 257. 279. "The constant prayer of some of them is *ohn namo Naraiana*. He also says the religion of others consists in repeating a form of prayer which consists of five letters or syllables, which they have constantly in their mouths, viz. *Nama Tchivaia*, which signifies *Blessed be Tchiven*.

The devotional ceremony called *Sandavana*, which is performed by the bramins every day, is as follows. At sun rise they fetch water from a pond in the hollow of their hand. This they throw sometimes before and sometimes behind them, or over their shoulder, invoking Brahma, and pronouncing his praises. They then throw some of

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the water towards the sun, and conclude with bathing. (*Sonnerat*, vol. 1, p. 252.)

That curious traveller Pietro delle Valle gives the following general account of the worship of the Hindoos, p. 137. "Lights being set up in all the temples, and the usual music of drums and pipes sounding, I saw in one temple a priest dance before the idol all naked, save that he had a small piece of linen over his privities, as many of them continually go. He had a drawn sword in his hand, which he flourished as if he had been fencing, but his motions were nothing but lascivious gestures. And, indeed, the greatest part of their worship of the gods consists in nothing but music, songs, dances, not only pleasant, but lascivious, and in waiting upon their idols as if they were living persons, viz. in presenting to them things to eat, washing them, perfuming them, giving them betel leaves, dying them with Sanders wood, carrying them abroad in processions, and such other things as the country people call sports."

Can any person think this kind of worship comparable to the decent and solemn worship of the Hebrew temple, in which the truly sublime, and in every sense of the word *devotional* psalms of David were sung, compositions expressive of every sentiment that becomes men with respect to their creator, benefactor, and moral governor, always

represented as a being omnipresent, of spotless purity, universal benevolence, and mercy, together with the strictest justice; not needing the aid of any inferior beings; his own eyes being in every place, beholding the evil and the good, Prov. xv, 3, and seeing even the inmost recesses of the heart, with a view to reward all men according to their works; not the alternately waking and sleeping God of the Hindoos, or served in so stupid a manner, but by truly pious affections, and active services to mankind.

Much of the religion of the Hindoos consists in oblations to the gods, by which is never meant the Supreme Being, the only object of the Hebrew worship, but the inferior deities, and to the *manes* of their ancestors, of which the Hebrews had no idea at all; and much ceremony, and a superstitious attention to many trifling circumstances, accompanied those acts of religion. The following are some of them, as prescribed in the Institutes of Menu.

“ Let all the dressed food be very hot, and let the bramins eat it in silence, nor let them declare the quality of the food, even tho’ asked by the giver. As long as the messes continue warm, as long as they eat it in silence, so long as the quality of the food is not declared by them, so long the Manes feed upon it, p. 82. Rice taken up, and not supported by both hands, the malevolent *asura’s* quickly

quickly rend into pieces, p. 80. In making offerings to the manes, let him at no time drop a tear, let him on no account be angry, let him say nothing false, let him not touch the tables with his food, let him not even shake the dishes. A tear sends the messes to the restless ghosts, anger to the foes, falsehood to the dogs, contact with the foot to the demons, agitation to sinners," p. 81.

The following also are among the rules relating to the oblations to the *Manes*, who seem to be as much respected as the gods to whom they usually sacrifice; from which it may be inferred that those gods are of no very high rank. "Mere water offered with faith to the progenitors of men in vessels of silver, or adorned with silver, proves the source of incorruption, p. 78. An oblation of the bramins to their ancestors transcends an oblation to the deities, because that to the deities is considered as the opening and completion of that to the ancestors, ib. Let the offering to the gods be at the beginning and end of the *Sradda*. It must not begin and end with an offering to the ancestors. For he who begins and ends it with an offering to the *Patris*, quickly perishes with his progeny," ib.

The ceremonies used by the people of Malabar during what they call prayer are said to be excessively tedious. Some times the greatest part of the time is taken up with them, and they must not be  
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omitted, or abridged, even in the presence of the king. (*Phillips Account*, p. 6.)

The Parfi's are no less superstitious in their prayers. A Parfi, says Mr. Richardson, p. 26, cannot even pare his nails, or cut his hair, without hundreds of unmeaning prayers, and the most tedious and ridiculous observances. But the omission of them, he adds, is gainful to the priests; for absolution must be purchased, and a fine is the indispensable consequence of the most minute and involuntary failure.

The reading and teaching of the Veda's is attended with as many superstitious observances by the Hindoos as their prayers; and for the following curious particulars we have the first authority, viz. the Institutes of Menu, which I shall therefore literally copy; and they are only some of the necessary attentions that are required on the occasion. We even find by Sir William Jones' account above-mentioned, that the reading of the Institutes of Menu, from which these extracts are taken, require the same, or similar attentions.

“ A bramin beginning and ending a lecture on the Veda must always pronounce to himself the syllable *om*; and unless the syllable *om* precede, his learning will slip away from him; and unless it follows, nothing will be long retained, p. 26. The reading of such as wish to attain the excellent reward

ward of virtue must continually be suspended in towns and cities, and always where an offensive smell prevails. In a district thro' which a corpse is carried, and in the presence of an unjust person, the reading of the scripture must cease ; and while the sound of whipping is heard, and in a promiscuous assembly of men, p. 102. In water, near midnight, and while the two natural excretions are made, or with a remnant of food in the mouth, or when the *fradda* has recently been eaten, let no man even meditate in his heart on the holy texts. A learned bramin having received an invitation to the obsequies of a single ancestor must not read the Veda for three days, nor when the king has a son born, nor when the dragon's head causes an eclipse, p. 102 ; As long as the scent and unctuousity of perfumes remains on the body of a learned priest, who has partaken of an entertainment, so long he must abstain from pronouncing the texts of the Veda. Let him not read lolling on a couch, nor with his feet raised on a bench, nor with his thighs crossed, nor having lately swallowed meat or rice, and other food given on the birth or death of a relation, nor in a cloud of dust, nor while arrows whiz, or a lute sounds, nor in either of the twilights, nor at the conjunction, nor on the fourteenth day, nor at the opposition, nor on the eighth day, of the moon. The dark lunar day destroys the spiritual teacher,  
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the fourteenth destroys the learner, the eighth and the day of the full moon destroys all remembrance of scripture ; for which reason he must avoid reading on those lunar days. Let no bramin read while dust falls like a shower, nor while the quarters of the firmament are inflamed, nor while shakals yell, nor while dogs bark or yelp, nor while asses or camels bray, nor while men in company chatter, p. 104. Never let him read on horseback, nor on a tree, nor on an elephant, nor in a boat, nor on an ass, nor on a camel, nor standing on barren ground, nor borne in a carriage, nor with an indigestion, nor after vomiting, nor with four eruptions, nor when the wind vehemently blows. If a beast used in agriculture, a frog, a cat, a dog, a snake, an ichneumon, or a rat, pass between the lecturer and his pupil, let him know that the lecture must be intermitted for a day and a night, p. 105. Knowing this collection of rules, let the learned read the Veda on every lawful day, having first repeated in order the pure essence of the three Veda's, viz, the *pranava*, the *vyahritis*, and the *gayatri*," p. 104.

Let, now, all the books of Moses be perused with the most prejudiced eye, nothing like any of these ridiculous observances will be found in them. Certain forms were prescribed in sacrificing, to prevent confusion ; and otherwise such whimsical observances as those above mentioned might have been introduced.

introduced. For why should the Israelites be more free from them than other nations, when they were equally ignorant ; and superstition has always prevailed in proportion to ignorance ? And tho' we may not be able, at this distance of time, to see the reasons for all the observances prescribed to the Hebrews, yet there is nothing in any of them so apparently absurd, but that it may well be supposed there *was* a good reason for it at the time of their institution. Their mere opposition to such absurd customs as universally prevailed in the heathen world, so as to render the two modes of worship incompatible with one another, would alone be a good reason for the appointment of any particular rite. For the great object of the religion of the Hebrews was to preserve in that nation, and from them to diffuse thro' the world, the knowledge and worship of the true God, and thereby to counteract the polytheism and idolatry which then universally prevailed, and more especially in nations the most famed for superior wisdom and civilization.

How came this one inconsiderable nation, and no other, to escape the universal contagion ? It was not from any want of natural propensity to it, as appears plainly enough in the whole course of their history. The controll of that propensity, therefore, must have come from some other source than themselves, and could only have been from God.

SECTION



## SECTION XIV.

*Of the Restrictions of the Hindoos and other ancient Nations with Respect to Food.*

A GREAT part of the religion of the Hindoos, as of that of all other ancient heathen nations, consists in the austerities to which they subject themselves. By means of these, joined with contemplation, and such devotion as has been described, they imagine they promote the purification of the soul, and prepare it for its reunion to the Supreme Being. But the Hindoos go far beyond the rest of mankind in voluntary restrictions and mortifications.

The great maxim on which this system of austerity is built is thus expressed in the Institutes of Menu, p. 29. "Man by the attachment of his organs to sensual pleasure incurs guilt, but having subdued them, he thence attains heavenly bliss."

Among the lightest restrictions to which the heathens have subjected themselves is the celibacy of some of their priests. But this is not the case of the bramins, tho' it is that of the Lama's of Tibet, (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 2, p. 172.) and also

also of the priests of Budda, and Somonocodom, who however may quit the order, and then marry whenever they please, *ib.* p. 27. They are also of no particular tribe, but are chosen out of the body of the people.

But restrictions with respect to eating and drinking are numerous with the Hindoos; and not being, like those of the Hebrews, founded on any rational system, must be very inconvenient; and these restrictions affect all the classes except the lowest. Among other things, all fermented or spirituous liquors are forbidden. "No inebriating liquor shall be taken by the chief of the twice born," (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 320.)

The reason why the liquor which we call *rack*, a spirit distilled from rice, is not allowed is particularly curious, as given in the *Institutes of Menu*. "Since the spirit of rice is distilled from *mala*, or the filthy refuse of the grain; and since *mala* is also the name for *sin*, let no bramin, Chatriya, or Vaify drink that spirit," p. 320. Wine was thought to have in it something of a pestiferous nature by the Egyptians, as having come not from God, but some evil genius. All the Eastern sages had the same idea. It was the opinion of the Magi, and the ancient Arabs, from whom it was adopted by Mahomet, (*Jablonfski*, vol. 1, p. 131, &c.) The prohibition of wine is among the precepts

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of Fo. (*Modern Universal History*, vol. 8, p. 114.)

In the laws of Moses the use of wine is only forbidden to the priests during their attendance in the sanctuary, and to those who, for what time they pleased, took upon themselves the vow of the Nazarites. It was, however, understood by the Jews, that the priests, even during their officiating in the sanctuary, were only forbidden to take so much wine as could intoxicate them; and this was evidently to prevent any indecency in the public worship. At other times the priests, as well as other Israelites, were allowed a moderate use of that valuable beverage. The psalmist very properly expresses his gratitude to God for it, as that which *maketh glad the heart of man*, Ps. civ. 15. Lemuel, in the book of Proverbs, with good reason says, Pr. xxxi. 6. *Give strong drink to him that is ready to perish, and wine to those that be of heavy hearts.* And Paul advises Timothy, not to confine himself to water, but to take a little wine for his stomach's sake, 1. Tim. v. 23.

Those of the Hindoos who are subject to the most restrictions with respect to diet are the brahmins, which shews that this system was not altogether founded on priestcraft, but was the result of speculation and serious opinion. The following are the instructions of Menu on the subject, "Garlick,

lick, onions, leeks, mushrooms, which no twice born man must eat, vegetables raised in dung, red gums, or resins, exuding from trees, and juices from wounded stems, the fruit *silu*, and the thickened milk of a cow within ten days after her calving, a priest must avoid with great care; as also rice pudding mixed with *tila*, frumenty, rice milk, and baked bread, which have not been first offered to some deity; flesh meet also, the food of gods, and clarified butter, which have not been first touched with holy texts well recited." They are also forbidden to eat "the milk of a camel, or that of any quadruped with a hoof not cloven, that of an ewe, or that of a cow in heat, or whose calf is dead, or absent from her, that of any forest beast, except the buffalo, the milk of a woman, and any thing naturally sweet, but acidulated, must all be carefully shunned. But among such acids buttermilk may be swallowed, and every preparation of buttermilk, and all acids extracted from pure flowers, roots or fruits, not cut with iron: Let every twice born man avoid carnivorous birds, and such as live in towns, the sparrow, the breed of the town cock, web-footed birds, and those which dive to devour fish. "Let him avoid meat kept at a slaughter house, and dried meat. He who eats the flesh of any animal is called the eater of that animal itself, and a fish eater is an eater of all flesh. From fish, therefore,



therefore, he must diligently abstain. Yet the two fishes, called *pathina*, and *rohita* may be eaten when offered at a repast in the house of the gods, or the manes. A twice born man, who has intentionally eaten a mushroom, the flesh of a tame hog, or a town cock, a leek, or an onion, or garlick, is degraded immediately," p. 133, &c. The Gen-  
too laws also say, p. 261, that "if a bramin voluntarily eat onions, or garlick, the magistrate shall banish him from the kingdom."

The same restrictions are not observed by other sects. A cow may be eaten in Siam, and the Siam-ese sometimes kill animals which are most respected in Hindostan; (*Ezourvedam*, p. 57.) The priests of Budda and Somonocodom may eat flesh, but not kill the animal, (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 2, p. 27.)

To a genuine Hindoo nothing appears more heinous than the killing, and much more the eating, of any thing that had life, "No mortal," say the Institutes of Menu, "exists more sinful than he who, without an oblation to the manes, desires to enlarge his own flesh with the flesh of another creature," p. 129.

The Hindoo lawgivers suppose that sometimes the desire to eat animal food may be almost irresistible. In this case there is the following curious provision in the Institutes of Menu, p. 127.

"Should

"Should a priest have an earnest desire to eat flesh meat, he may gratify his fancy by forming the image of some beast with clarified butter, thickened, or he may form it with dough; but never let him form a wish to kill any animal in vain."

The following penalty for killing and eating any animal must be sufficient to deter any person who can believe that it will be inflicted. Others the threatening will affect in a different manner. "As many hairs as grow on the beast, so many similar deaths shall the slayer of it for his own satisfaction in this world endure in the next, from birth to birth," (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 127.) But then the reward for the strict observance of the injunction is likewise very great. "He who injures no animated creature shall attain without hardship whatever he thinks of, whatever he strives for, whatever he fixes his mind on," *ib.* p. 129.

Notwithstanding these prohibitions, the sacrifice of animals having been practiced from time immemorial, and also the partaking by the worshippers of what was thus given to the gods, even the Hindoos make an exception to their rule in this case. "On solemn offerings to a guest, at a sacrifice, and in holy rites to the manes, or the gods, but on those occasions only, may cattle be slain. This law Menu enacted," (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 128.)

128.) In the idea of the Hindoos cattle were originally created for this sole purpose, and in their opinion much more depends upon it than, without particular information from the highest authority, we should have suspected. "By the selfexistent in person," say the Institutes of Menu, "were beasts created for sacrifice; and sacrifice was ordained for the increase of this universe. The slaughter therefore of beasts for sacrifice is in truth no slaughter," p. 128. F. Bouchet also says, that tho' the bramins are not allowed to eat meat, they are obliged to eat it at a sacrifice called *Ethiam*, when a sheep is killed, and they divide it among themselves (*Religious Ceremonies*, p. 382.) \*

Other ancient nations, and especially the Egyptians, whose institutions and customs are perhaps  
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\* Mr. Holwell, however, says that originally the Hindoos had no bloody sacrifices of any kind, and that there is no allusion to that mode of worship in the *Chartah Bhade*, that the bramins say that none but Moisafoor himself could have invented it, it is so repugnant to the true spirit of devotion, and so abhorrant to the eternal one, vol. 2, p. 84. This is so directly contrary to every other authority, and so improbable in itself, as all other nations without a single exception sacrificed animals, that I have no doubt of its being a mistake of this writer, who yet had the means of the best information.

of as great antiquity as those of the Hindoos, laid themselves under various superstitious restrictions with respect to food. Herodotus says the Egyptians neither sowed nor ate beans, nor would they taste the head of any animal, lib. 2, sec. 32. In this, according to Plutarch, they were imitated by the Romans, who also when they were purified, abstained from pulse (*Roman Questions.*) The Egyptians, he also says, ate no flesh of sheep or swine, nor, in the time of their purifications, did they eat salt (*De Iside & Osiride.*) They considered the sea as the excrement of Typhon, and even of the world, and held the sea, and sea salt, in abomination, tho' they would use rock salt. For this reason they had a dislike to fish (*Fablonski*, vol. 1, p. 84.) According to Juveral they never ate any animals that bore wool, any more than onions and leeks.

Porrum et cepe nefas violare, et frangere morfu.

———Lanatis animalibus abstinet omnis

Menfa. Nefas illic fœtum jugulare Capellæ.

SAT. 15.

All the Egyptians, however, did not observe the same rules of diet. Some of them, Herodotus says, abstained from some kinds of sea fish, and others from other kinds. Some would eat none that were caught with a hook, lest it should have touched  
a pike,



a pike, which they thought would pollute it. The people of Syene abstained from the sea bream, and the priests from all fish, lib. 2, sec. 37. The Syrians had the same objection to fish. Plutarch in his treatise on Superstition says the superstitious believe that if a man taste of a minow, or bleak, the Syrian goddess will eat thro' his shins, fill his body with sores, and dissolve his liver. Pythagoras, he also says, ate no fish.

The most probable reason that I have met with for the dislike which the Egyptians had to onions and beans, and also to wool in garments, may be collected from Plutarch's treatise de Iside and Osiride. Having a prejudice against *matter* in general, they had a stronger against *excrementitious matter*, and every thing that promoted it. Hair, and wool, they considered in the light of excrements; and the eating of onions and beans, besides being too nutritious, and thereby promoting a great increase of matter in the body, and especially of *fat*, which they regarded as excrementitious, was the occasion, they thought, of offensive excrements. For this reason they would not allow their sacred bull to be too fat, and to prevent this they never gave him to drink of the water of the Nile, which was supposed to have that tendency. This also was the reason why the Egyptian priests cut off their hair, and also why they were circumcised,

cised, the foreskin being deemed both superfluous, and the cause of uncleanness. According to Hesiod, as quoted by Plutarch, men's nails were cut at the festivals of the gods.

Let this account of prohibited meats be compared with that of Moses, and it will appear, whatever Mr. Langles may say to the contrary, that the one was not copied from the other. They are formed on quite different principles. By Moses nothing probably was forbidden to be eaten that is really proper for the food of man in the climate of Palestine. In his rules we see nothing fanciful, or arbitrary; whereas nothing can be more evidently so than several of the Hindoo restrictions, and we are puzzled in our conjectures concerning the reasons of them. Some say their abstinence from flesh meat was enjoined on account of the supposed transmigration of human souls into the bodies of the animals. Others say it was because their gods were formerly concealed in their forms. But this will hardly account for their objection to eating beans, onions, and other wholesome vegetables.

X

SECTION

## SECTION XV.

*Of the Austerities of the Hindoos and other heathen Nations.*

I NOW proceed to give an account of more serious austerities. It being supposed that the element of *water*, as well as that of *fire*, has the power of purifying the soul, and that the water of some rivers has more efficacy in this respect than others, *pilgrimages* for the purpose of bathing in distant rivers is very common with the Hindoos. The river that is generally preferred is the Ganges. In this, says Mr. Lord, p. 87, they not only bathe, but to it they carry offerings; and immense quantities of precious stones are thrown into it.

Many persons add particular austerities to their journeys. "They go" says Bernier "long pilgrimages, not only stark naked, but loaded with iron chains, like those that are about the necks of elephants." "Not long ago one of them finished measuring the distance between Benares and Jagernaut by alternately stretching himself on the ground, and rising, which must have taken up years to complete," (*Sketches relating to the history, &c. of the Hindoos*, vol. 1, p. 241.)

But

But the great business of the expiation of crimes, and the advancement of the purification of the soul, has led those people to much greater austerities than these. Thinking they could not mortify the body too much, they have inflicted upon themselves the most dreadful torments, that it is in the power of nature to support, and even beyond this. For many of them have knowingly, and in various ways, some of them the most shocking to think of, put an end to their own lives. The following are the directions solemnly prescribed in the Institutes of Menu, p. 150, for those bramins who aim at perfection.

“ Having remained in the order of a house-keeper, let the twice born man dwell in a forest, his faith being firm, and his organs wholly subdued. When the father of a family perceives his muscles become flaccid, and his hair grey, and sees the child of his child, let him then seek refuge in a forest. Let him eat green herbs, roots, and fruit. Let him wear a black antelope's hide, or a vesture of bark. Let him bathe evening and morning. Let him suffer the hair of his head, his beard, and his nails, to grow continually, p. 145, &c. Honey and flesh meat he must avoid, and all sorts of mushrooms. Let him not eat the produce of ploughed land, nor fruits, or roots produced in a town, tho' hunger oppress him,



p. 147. Let him slide backwards and forwards on the ground, or let him stand a whole day on tip-toe, or let him continue in motion, rising and sitting alternately; but at sun rise, at noon, and at sun set, let him go to the water and bathe, p. 140. In the hot season let him stand exposed to five fires, four blazing round him, with the sun above. In rain let him stand uncovered, where the clouds pour the heaviest showers. In the cold season let him wear humid vesture, and let him increase by degrees the austerity of his devotion; and enduring harsher and harsher mortifications, let him dry up his bodily frame. Then, having reposed the holy fires as the law directs in his mind; let him live without external fire, without a mansion, wholly silent, feeding on roots and fruit. Or let him advance in a straight path towards the invincible North East point, feeding on water and air, till his mortal frame totally decay, and his soul became united with the Supreme, p. 149. A bramin having shuffed off his body by any of those modes, which great sages practiced, and becoming void of sorrow and fear, rises to exaltation in the divine essence. After he has read the Veda in the form prescribed by the law, has legally begotten a son, and has performed sacrifice to the best of his power, he may apply his heart to eternal bliss. But if he has not paid those three debts, and yet  
aim

aim at final beattitude, he shall sink to a place of degradation," p. 150.

Compared with this, the whippings, and other austerities of P. Damiani, and other Catholic devotees, was indulgence. In the Ezourvedam four states of bramins are described according to their degrees of perfection. "The lowest of them is that in which they marry and live in the world, p. 290. The next is that in which they marry, but cease to come near their wives, or take any care of their children. The third is that in which they go into the woods, to live far from the world, and its snares. He who has the courage to embrace it must for ever abandon father, mother, wife, and children. He will thus renounce all the good things of this world, and cut up by the roots anger and covetousness. He must live on alms but without begging, p. 292. The last and most perfect consists of those whose only occupation is the knowledge of God, and of truth. They have no passions, and an absolute command over their senses," 295. According to the Bagavadam, the most perfect of these become dumb, silly, or mad.

Among the different *fasts* in honour of different deities, there is one that is thought to have singular efficacy to efface all sins. It is called *Sandra-ionon*, and consists in an abstinence of twelve days together, in honour of the moon. Then follows

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an account of the practices of each of those days. (*Ezourvedam*, vol. 2, p. 33.) "On the eleventh, he eats nothing, but drinks the urine of a cow." In the same work we are told that "the last state of contemplation, called *Achattangayogan*, terminates in living on nothing but air," vol. 2, p. 229, and this could not last long.

It were endless to recite all the particulars of the strange austerities to which those who are called *Faquirs* subject themselves. Accounts of them may be seen in all the books of travels into Hindostan. Some of them always sit cross legged, or hold up their arms over their heads. Some twist their arms one within the other. Some let their nails grow to a great length, and keeping their hands shut, let them pierce thro' the back of them. (*Sketches relating to the history, &c. of the Hindoos*, vol. 1, p. 241.) Others stand on their heads, or on one leg, others continue on the tops of trees, or under certain trees, or in temples; and they who continue in the same posture the longest, are esteemed the most devout. (*Phillips account of Malabar*, p. 22.) Bernier, after giving a particular account of some of their strange and painful postures, says that many of them are so difficult, that we have no posture-masters able to imitate them, vol. 2, p. 134.

At the festival called *Maritale* some persons, tho' of the lowest classes, make a vow to be whirled in  
the

the air in a machine constructed for the purpose, in which they are suspended on iron hooks thrust thro' the skin of their backs. Being then elevated considerably above the ground, they generally brandish a sword and buckler, and behave as if they felt no pain, having commonly drank some intoxicating liquor beforehand. (*Sonnerat*, vol. 1, p. 244.) Mr. Dow says, p. 39, that this custom is kept up in commemoration of a martyr, who was in this manner tortured for his faith.

It was the custom of some of the ancient idolaters to make indelible marks on their hands, or other parts of their bodies as some symbol of the deity to whose worship they particularly devoted themselves. The same is done in some parts of the East, tho' not that I have found in Hindostan. According to the Universal Historians, the people of Arrakan wear the mark of their household gods branded on their arms, sides and shoulders, vol. 7, p. 23.

The idea of *fire* being one of the great purifiers of the soul, probably contributed to recommend the following instance of voluntary pain described by Mr. Sonnerat, vol. 1, p. 257. "The only public festival in honor of *Darmaraja*, and *Drobede* his wife is that of *Nerpou-Tirounal* or the feast of fire, because they walk upon that element. It continues eighteen days, during which they who make a

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vow to observe it must fast, abstain from women, lie on the ground without any mat, and walk over burning coals. On the eighteenth day they repair to the place, to the sound of musical instruments, their heads crowned with flowers, their bodies daubed over with saffron, and follow in cadence the images of Darma-Raja and Drobede, which are carried in procession. When they approach the hot coals they stir them, to make them burn more fiercely. They then rub their foreheads with some of the cinders, and when the deities have made the circuit of the fire three times, they walk faster or slower according to the ardour of their devotion on the burning coals, which cover a space of about forty feet in length. Some carry their children in their arms, others lances, sabres and standards. The most devout walk over the fire several times."

According to Strabo and Pliny, the priests of Favonia, even in the time of Augustus, used to walk barefoot on burning coals, and Virgil mentions this custom, in the address of Aruns to Apollo,

——— *Medium, freti pietate, per ignem  
Cultores multa premimus vestigia pruna.*

ÆN. lib. ii.

See also Silius Italicus lib. 5. But Strabo says this was done in the rites of the goddess Feronia. He says that persons every year walked with their feet

feet naked, and without receiving any hurt, where great crowds were assembled to see them, lib. 5.

In all countries, and in all ages, many of the rites of the heathen religions have been of a painful nature. Several of the sacred rites of the Egyptians consisted of mourning. While the sacrifice on the festival of Isis was burning, the people kept beating themselves, (*Herodotus*, lib. 2. sec. 40.) No person could be initiated into the sacred rites of Mithra among the Persians till he had gone thro' eighty degrees of torture of different kinds. He was first made to swim over a great space of water, and then to throw himself into the fire. He then passed a long time in solitude, abstained from food, &c. &c. &c. If he survived these, he was initiated into the mysteries. (*Fablon-ski, Prolegomena*, p. 143.)

We are most of all shocked at persons devoting themselves to certain and even very painful deaths from this miserable superstition, and this is far from being uncommon with the Hindoos. There are among them many instances of devotees and penitents, as they are called, throwing themselves under the chariot wheels of Chiva, or of Vichnou, when the idols are drawn out to celebrate their festivals, and being thereby crushed to death, (*Bernier*, vol. 2, p. 104. *Sketches relating to the history, &c. of the Hindoos*, vol. 1, p. 242.) The

Universal Historians give the same account. To the wheels of the waggon they say, (vol. 6, p. 537,) on which the images are carried in procession on festival days, great iron hooks are fastened; and on those some of the men throw themselves, so that being turned round with the wheels, they are cut to pieces. Others lie sprawling on the ground for the wheels to pass over them, and crush them to death. The same is done in Arrakan, vol. 7, 27. Mr. Sonnerat says that some fathers and mothers throw their children under the wheels of the chariot, thinking that the deity will raise them to eternal happiness in another world, vol. 1, p. 277. At the festival of Tirounal, he says, six or seven thousand persons join to draw this chariot, ib. p. 226.

But the most affecting instances of voluntary death, if they can be said to be always voluntary, are those of the Hindoo women burning themselves alive with the bodies of their deceased husbands, which, tho' not absolutely required, is strongly recommended in the Hindoo institutions. We have seen the degraded state of women in this country, how much it is below that of men. In this way, however, and it seems to be the only one, they have an opportunity of attaining the same state of happiness with them after death. And this action is esteemed so honourable for the family in which

which it takes place, and to the religion itself, that nothing is omitted, especially on the part of the bramins, to encourage, and almost compel, widows to do it; and if they once give their consent, it is hardly in their power to recede. And according to the testimony of travellers, many of these widows go to the fire as much against their wills as if it was a real human sacrifice.

Mr. Holwell says that the women are not allowed to declare their resolution to burn themselves till the expiration of twenty four hours after the death of their husbands, vol. . p. 88, and that this custom was introduced by the authors of the Chatah and Auchtorrah Bhade's, who strained some expressions in the original Shaster for the purpose, p. 91. Mr. Dow says, p. 35, that this practice was never reckoned a religious duty, as has been erroneously supposed in the West. But by this he can only mean that it is not of universal obligation.

The strict Hindoos certainly consider this action as one of the most important in all their religion, the cause of which it is said it would be hardly right to investigate. (*Preface to the Gentoo laws*, p. 67.) "It is proper," say these laws, "for a woman after her husband's death to burn herself in the fire with his corpse. Every woman who thus burns herself shall remain in paradise with her husband



band three *crore*, and *fifty lacks* of years by destiny. If she cannot burn she must preserve an inviolate chastity. She then goes to paradise; otherwise to hell," p. 253. Another powerful inducement to this practice is that the children of those who burn themselves become illustrious, and are sometimes received into casts superior to their own. (*Holwell*, vol. 2, p. 89.)

Some of the cases of this kind mentioned by travellers are very affecting. The heroism and tranquillity with which some women do this, holding their husbands heads in their laps, and lighting the fire themselves, is astonishing; while others are tied fast, or pushed into the fire, their shrieks being drowned by the bramins. Bernier saw a woman burning with her husband without discovering any symptom of terror, while five of her maids, after dancing round the fire, threw themselves into it one after another with the greatest seeming indifference, vol. 2, p. 122. He says that when they discover any reluctance, the bramins sometimes force them into the fire. In some cases, he says, that, instead of burning them, they bury them up to the neck, and then strangle them by turning their heads round, p. 133.

On the deaths of great persons, those victims of superstition, voluntary or involuntary, are sometimes very numerous. At the death of a king of Tanjore,

Tanjore, no less than three hundred of his concubines leaped into the flames, and four hundred burned themselves at the funeral of a naique of Madura. (*Maurice's Indian Antiquities*, vol. 2, p. 165.)

Dying by fire is deemed very meritorious in men, but is seldom practised. There is, however, one celebrated instance of this on record, viz. that of Calanus, an Indian philosopher, as he is called, who burned himself in the presence of Alexander the great and his officers. Sometimes the Hindoos burn persons when they think them to be past recovery. An English surgeon once met a number of persons carrying a man, whom they thought to be dying, to a pyle; when, feeling his pulse, he said he was not past recovery, and taking him back he restored him to perfect health. (*Modern Universal History*, vol. 6, p. 280.)

The idea of purifying the departing soul by means of *water* is the reason that great numbers of Hindoos chuse, or are made, to die in rivers. Very often, says Bernier, p. 130, when they are just about to expire, the bramins plunge them into the river, that the soul of the deceased may be washed from its impurities in the act of leaving the body. This, he said, he heard not only from the vulgar, but from the most learned of their bramins. And when once a man has desired to be conducted to the river,

he cannot retract his word, and therefore he is carried to it; when they first put his feet in, then make him drink a good deal of the water, exhorting him to do it with devotion, and confidence, as a certain means of washing his soul, and of blotting out all his sins; and at last they push him into it, tho' ever so unwilling. Many, it is said, are drowned in this manner, whom an indiscreet devotion, or some discontent in their family, had brought thither, and repented when it was too late. (*Agreement of the customs of the East-Indians with those of the Jews, &c.* p. 52.)

This mildest of all religions (for such is the character that is generally given to it) a religion which will not hurt a fly, \* was in its origin as cruel and sanguinary

\* At Cambaye P. Della Valle saw "a hospital for birds of all kinds, which for being sick, or lame, deprived of their mates, or otherwise needing food or cure, are kept and tended with the greatest diligence; and the persons who take care of them are maintained by the public alms. When they are recovered, if they be wild, they are let go; if domestic, they are given to some pious person who keeps them in his house. The most curious thing," he says "that I saw in this place, were some little mice, which being found orphans, without fire or dam to attend them, were put into this hospital, and a venerable old man with a white beard, keeping them in a box with cotton, very diligently attended them, with spectacles on

sanguinary as any other. Like all other ancient systems of heathenism, it enjoined human sacrifices, tho' in process of time they were laid aside, as they were in great measure by the Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Romans. The Veda's enjoined human sacrifices, (*Sketches relating to the history, &c. of the Hindoos*, vol. 1, p. 225.) The Institutes of Menu say that the sacrifice of a man was required in former ages, but not then, p. 364. They say also that the obligation to expiation extending to death is abrogated, p. 365. Sir William Jones says that the ancient solemn sacrifice of the Hindoos was that of a man, a bull, and a horse, (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 1, p. 51.)

In a collection of Voyages by *Delaporte*, which, tho' no authorities are quoted in it, is supposed to

his nose, giving them milk to eat with a bird's feather, because they were so little that as yet they could eat nothing else; and he told us he intended, when they were grown up, to let them go free where they pleased. The next morning, going into the city, we saw another hospital for goats, kids, sheep and weathers, either sick or lame. We saw another hospital for cows and calves, some of which had broken legs, others more infirm, very old or lean, and therefore were kept here to be cured.<sup>24</sup>  
P. 35, &c.



to be compiled from such as may be depended upon, the traveller says, vol. 3, p. 444. "In Malabar a person told us that one of his ancestors had been sacrificed to their idols. It was the ancient custom of the country to condemn certain persons to sacrifice themselves, which they did by giving themselves twelve wounds with so many different knives. The last stab was to the heart, after which he was burned by his family."

Various animals, among which were men, as well as bulls, were anciently sacrificed by the Chinese, (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 1, p. 229.) Indeed, this horrid custom seems to have been universally practiced by all ancient nations, except that of the Hebrews only; so that Mr. Holwell's denial of it with respect to the Hindoos, besides being contradicted by positive authorities, is of no weight at all.

The temples of Ilythia, or Lucina, in Egypt were stained with human blood. There they burned men alive. Three were sacrificed in this cruel manner every day, and therefore when Amosis forbade those sacrifices, he directed three images of wax to be burned in their stead. The authors of these horrid rites Jablonski supposes to have been the shepherds who invaded, and for some time kept possession of, Egypt, vol. 2, p. 69, 75.

Plutarch

Plutarch says that Amestris, the wife of Xerxes, buried twelve men alive, as a sacrifice which she made for his health, and Photius says that the Persians offered men women and children to Mithra. Celsus, as quoted by Origen, says that they offered seven embryo's to this deity, on account of the seven planets, (*Lord*, p. 223.) The Romans, Plutarch says, buried two men and two women alive in the market place, two Greeks and two Gauls, and yet censured the Barbarians called *Bletemanfes* for sacrificing a man to their god, (*Roman Questions*.)

If the bramins in the East, bore, as has been supposed, any relation to the Druids in the West, this horrid rite must have prevailed in Hindostan as it did among the Gauls and Britons, whose religion was so abhorrent to humanity on this account that the Romans forbade the exercise of it.

The religious customs of the Northern nations of Europe were, in several respects, similar to those of the East; and with them human sacrifices were universal, and continued a long time. It was a maxim with the Gauls, that where the life of a man was concerned, the gods would not be appeased but with the lives of men; and therefore when they were seized with a dangerous illness, or in any great danger, they sacrificed men for victims, or made vows that they would sacrifice them. In

Britain prisoners of war, robbers, and persons guilty of other heinous crimes, were either slain on altars, or burned alive in machines of wicker work constructed in the shape of men, as sacrifices to their deities, (*Cæsar's Com. lib. vi. sec. 14.*)

In Scandinavia they held a festival every ninth month, which lasted nine days, and every day they offered nine living victims, men or animals. But every ninth year the most solemn sacrifices were offered at Upsal, when the king, the senate, and all the citizens of any distinction attended in person; and they chose among the captives in time of war, and slaves in times of peace, nine persons to be sacrificed. But in times of great calamity they sacrificed persons of more consequence. The first king of Vermland was burned in honor of Odin, to put an end to a great dearth. Hacon king of Norway offered his son in sacrifice to obtain the victory over his enemy Harold. Aune king of Sweden devoted to Odin the blood of his nine sons, to prevail on that god to prolong his life. The ancient history of the North abounds with similar examples. (*Northern Antiquities, vol. 1, p. 134.*)

In the capital of Denmark they offered every ninth year ninety-nine men, as many horses, dogs, and cocks. In Iceland there were two temples, in which they offered human victims, and a pit, or well, into which they were thrown headlong, *ib.*

p. 138. The priests of these inhuman deities were called *Drotter*, probably the same with *Druids*, ib.  
p. 140.

The reflections of Plutarch on this subject in his tract on *Superstition* are so much to the purpose, that I shall close this section with them. "Men," he says, "were not at first made Atheists by any fault they found in the heavens or stars, or seasons of the year, or in those revolutions or motions of the sun about the earth that make the day and night, nor yet by observing any mistake or disorder, either in the breeding of animals, or the production of fruits. No, it was the uncouth actions, and senseless passions of superstition, her canting words, her foolish gestures, her charms, her magic, her freakish processions, her tabourings, her foul expiations, her vile methods of purgation, and her barbarous and inhuman penances and bemirings, at the temples. It was these, I say, that gave occasion to many to affirm it would be far happier if there were no gods at all than such as are pleased with such fantastical toys, who thus abuse their votaries, and are incensed and pacified with trifles."

"Had it not been much better for the so much famed Gauls, and Scythians, that they had neither thought, nor imagined, nor heard any thing of their gods, than to have believed them such as would be pleased with the blood of human sacrifices; and  
that



that accounted such for the most complete and meritorious of expiations. How much better had it been for the Carthaginians if they had had either a Critias or a Diagoras for their first Lawgiver, that so they might have believed neither god nor spirits, than to make such offerings to Saturn as they made. But they knowingly and willingly themselves devoted their own children; and they who had none of their own bought of some poor people, and then sacrificed them like lambs or pigeons; the poor mother standing by the while without either a sigh or a tear; or if by chance she fetched a sigh, or let fall a tear, she lost the price of her child, and it was nevertheless sacrificed. All the places round the image were in the mean time filled with the noise of hautboys and tabors, to drown the poor infants crying."

So far was this most horrid rite of human sacrifice from finding a place among the institutions of Moses, that in his writings, and in all the books of the Old Testament, it is spoken of with the greatest abhorrence and detestation; and the practice is particularly mentioned as the greatest of those abominations for which the ancient inhabitants of Canaan were expelled to make way for the Israelites Deut. xii. 29. *When the Lord thy God shall cut off the nations from before thee, whither thou goest to possess them, and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their*

their land, take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee, and that thou inquire not after their gods; saying, How did these nations serve their gods, even so will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so to the Lord thy God. For every abomination to the Lord, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods. For even their sons and their daughters have they burned in the fire to their gods. The shedding of innocent blood, with which the Israelites are so often charged, and which is mentioned by the prophets as one of the causes of their expulsion from their country, was, I doubt not, the blood of innocent children sacrificed in this manner. Notwithstanding this, the Israelites are by modern unbelievers treated as *Barbarians*, and said to have borrowed their institutions from those of their more civilized neighbours; and it is affirmed that the five books of Moses are only copies of those of the Hindoos. What must be the force of prejudice in men who can entertain, and propagate this opinion!

## SECTION

## SECTION XVI.

*Of the Hindoo Penances.*

**T**HE rules concerning penance, or atonement for specific offences, makes one of the most serious articles in the system of the Hindoo religion; and so numerous and intricate are they, that it must have been very difficult to understand, and still more to remember them.

In the Institutes of Menu there is the following enumeration of the principal agents in the great business of the purification of the soul when it has contracted any pollution. "Sacred learning, austere devotion, fire, holy aliment, the earth, the wind, water, and smearing with cow dung, are prescribed acts of religion. The sun and time, are the purifiers of embodied spirits," p. 136. It is not easy, however, to conceive how things so very different in their natures as these are should produce the same effect.

The same rites of purification were also had recourse to by way of prevention, as well as for the cure of moral evil; and even the inferior deities were thought to have practiced some of them, as we learn from the following passage in the same work.

"He

\* He who for a whole month eats no more than thrice eighty mouthfuls of wild grains, as he happens by any means to meet with them, keeping his organs in subjection, shall attain the same abode with the regents of the moon. The eleven *Rudra's* the twelve *Aditya's*, the eight *Vasu's*, the *Maruts*, or genii of the winds, and the seven great *Richis* have performed this lunar penance, as a security from all evil, p. 338.

According to the laws of Moses, a person who had touched a dead body was deemed unclean. But the idea of this kind of impurity is carried much farther by the Hindoos. With them the person who only hears that a relation is dead, in a distant country, is deemed unclean. "If ten days after he died have not passed, he is unclean for the remainder of those days only. If ten days have elapsed he is unclean for three nights. If a year has expired, he is purified by touching water." (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 132.)

Women are subject to various impurities. With respect to some of them we read that, "by oblation to fire during the mothers pregnancy, by holy rites on the birth of a child, by the tonsure of the head, with a lock of hair left on it, by the ligation of the sacrificial cord, are seminal and uterine taints of the three classes wholly removed," ib p. 20.

Not only is the drinking of wine, and spirituous  
liquors



liquors a great sin, but even for drinking water in a vessel in which there has been any liquor of that kind, the following purification is deemed necessary. "For drinking water in a vessel where spirit of rice, or any spirituous liquor, has been kept, he may swallow nothing for five days and nights but the plant *Sanchapushpi*, boiled in milk," ib 328.

But the drinking of the spirit itself is an offence not so easily expiated. "Any twice born man who has intentionally drank spirit of rice, thro' perverse delusion of mind, may drink more spirit in flame, and atone for his offence by severely burning his body : Or he may drink until he die the urine of a cow, or pure water, or milk, or clarified butter, or juice expressed from cow dung." p. 320.

The following are different cases of penance for the offences of bramins or priests. "He who has taught the Veda's on a forbidden day may atone for his offence by subsisting a whole year on barley alone, p. 334. He who for seven successive days omits the ceremony of begging food, and offers not wood to the sacred fire, must perform the penance of *avarcini*, unless he be afflicted with illness. This duty of a mendicant is ordained by the wise for the bramins alone, p. 41. The priest who neglects keeping the sacred hearth, by voluntarily neglecting the morning and evening oblations to the fire, must perform the penance *chandrayana* for one month;

month; since that neglect is equally sinful with the slaughter of a son, p. 312. Let the *Sanieffy*" (the highest attainment of a bramin) "by way of expiation for the death of those creatures which he may have destroyed unknowingly, by day or by night, make six suppressions of his breath, having duly bathed," p. 151. The reward for not violating this precept is peculiarly great. "To a bramin by whom not even the smallest dread, has been occasioned to sentient creatures, there can be no dread from any quarter whatever, when he obtains a release from his mortal body," (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 150.)

The effect of rightly pronouncing certain words, especially *om*, the *gayatri*, and another which Sir William Jones supposes to signify the *earth*, the *sky*, and *heaven*, is represented as peculiarly great in the business of expiation. The *Institutes of Menu* say concerning a student, "Let not the sun ever set or rise while he lies asleep. If the sun should rise or set while he sleeps thro' sensual indulgence, he must fast a whole day, repeating the *gayatri*, p. 45. Should a bramin who has once tasted the holy juice of the moon plant even smell the breath of a man who drinks spirits, he must remove the taint by thrice repeating the *gayatri*, while he suppresses his breath in water, and by eating clarified butter after that ceremony, p. 328.

By three thousand repetitions of the gayatri, with intense application of mind, and by subsisting on milk only, for a whole month, in the pasture of cows, a bramin who has received any gift from a bad man may be cleansed from his sin, p. 334. The oblation of clarified butter to fire must be made every day by the penitent himself, accompanied with the mighty words (*earth, sky, heaven,*) p. 338. Sixteen suppressions of breath, with the three mighty words, and the trilateral syllable, continued each day for a month, will absolve even the slayer of a bramin from his hidden faults, p. 341. A priest who should retain in his memory the whole *Rigveda* would be absolved from guilt even if he had slain the inhabitants of three worlds, and had eaten food from the foulest hands," p. 343.

We have here a singular conjunction of offences, as of equal degrees of guilt, when in the nature of things they are certainly very different; and from the order in which they are placed it should seem that the eating of food from foul hands was a greater crime than murder. However, these Institutes of Menu say that "some of the learned consider these expiations as confined to involuntary sin; but that others, from the evidence of the Veda's, hold them to be effectual in the case of those that are voluntary," p. 313. But there cannot well be any doubt

doubt that the latter are in the right, if this penance, and many others which I shall copy from these Institutes, be agreeable to the Veda's.

The effect of these religious acts is not confined to the living. It extends even to the dead. For the manes are supposed to partake of the food that is offered to them. \* We are even informed what will satisfy them for any specified time; and the cases are not a little curious.

"What sort of oblation given daily to the manes are capable of satisfying them for a long time, or for eternity, I will now declare without omission. The ancestors of men are satisfied a whole month with *tila*, rice, barley, black lentils, or vetches, water roots, and fruits given with prescribed ceremonies; two months with fish, three months with venison, four with mutton, five with the flesh of such birds as the twice born may eat, six months with the flesh of kids, seven with that of spotted deer, eight with that of the deer or antelope called *ana*, nine with that of the *ruru*, ten with that of wild boars, or wild buffaloes, eleven with that of rabbits,

\* According to Homer, the ghosts of the dead drank of blood, and then spake. The author of the life of Homer in Gale's *Opuscula Mythologica*, after mentioning this, adds. "For he knew that that blood was the food of the spirit (*pneuma*) and that the spirit is either the soul itself (*psuche*) or the vehicle of the soul," p. 341.



rabbits, hares, or tortoises; a whole year with the milk of cows, and food made of that milk. From the flesh of the long eared white goat their satisfaction endures twelve years. The pot herb *calafaca*, the fish *mahafalca*, or the *diodon*, the flesh of a rhinoceros, or an iron coloured kid, honey, and all such forest grains as are eaten by hermits, are formed for their satisfaction without end. Whatever pure food mixed with honey a man offers on the thirteenth day of the moon, in the season of rain, and under the lunar asterism *magha*, has likewise a ceaseless duration. Oh may that man, say the manes, be born in our line, who may give us milky food with honey and pure butter, both on the thirteenth of the moon, and when the shadow of an elephant falls to the East. Whatever a man endowed with strong faith piously offers as the law has directed becomes a perpetual unperishable gratification to his ancestors in the other world." (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 86.)

In these wretched superstitions we may perhaps see the reason of some of the laws of Moses, many of which were evidently intended to counteract the customs of the heathens in early times. What we find in his writings concerning the *sacrifices of the dead*, and phrases of a similar import, probably refer to these oblations to the manes of dead ancestors, which we see to make so great a part of the religion

religion of the Hindoos, and also of the Chinese, but which never enters into that of the Hebrews. Perhaps, too, the great stress we here find to be laid on the use of *honey* in these oblations was the reason why it was wholly forbidden in the Hebrew ritual, and salt only made use of.

It is in vain, however, for the most prejudiced unbeliever to look for any thing parallel to this doctrine of purification and expiation in the institutions of Moses, or that looks as if they were borrowed, directly or indirectly, from them, as Mr. Langles asserts. All the modes of purification prescribed there are for involuntary offences, or impurities that are not of a moral nature. With respect to real crimes, hear what David says, Ps. li. 16. *Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it, thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit. A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.* Repentance and reformation is the only atonement for sin according to the religion of the Hebrews, but that was effectual. Hear what the prophet Ezekiel says on this subject, Ch. xxxiii, 14. *When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; if the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, and walk in the statutes of life without committing iniquity, he shall surely live, he shall not die.*

As to austerities of any kind, none are prescribed in the books of Moses. The only thing of that nature to which any countenance is given is the vow of the Nazarites, which was to drink no wine, and not to cut their hair for a limited time, fixed by themselves. The Hebrews had only one prescribed day of fasting in the whole year, and that not attended with any particular austerity; whereas they had three annual festivals, each of some continuance, besides the *sabbath*, which, tho' a day of rest from labour, was always considered as a festival. Their lands also had their rest, and were to lie uncultivated every seventh year; but they had the promise of a double harvest the year preceding, when they could not fail to observe whether the promise was fulfilled or not; so that they ran no risk from omitting to plow and sow their lands; and when their law was most strictly observed, as it was after their return from the Babylonish captivity, we hear no complaint of any inconvenience resulting from it. If there was any use, as there evidently was, in reminding the Israelites that it was God who gave them their country, and who put them into the possession of it by his own power, and of his right to give it on what terms he thought proper, it would not be easy to fix upon any method better adapted to answer the purpose. The foundation of the rite of sacrificing,  
which

which appeared so proper as to have been adopted by all mankind, was the very same. It expressed their acknowledgment that they received all from God, by giving back to him some part of it. The spontaneous produce of the ground on the sabbatical year was given to the poor, and what was given them, was considered as given to God.

The rite of circumcision, which was prescribed to Abraham, being performed on children when they were only eight days old, who could suffer nothing from apprehension beforehand, and but little pain afterwards, is a circumstance of small moment; and if there was to be any indelible mark upon their flesh, to remind every individual of the nation of their extraction, and future prospects, and thereby attach them to their laws, nothing perhaps could have been thought of so well adapted to answer the end, with so little real inconvenience. Other people voluntarily practice the same without any complaint. This was the case of the Egyptian priests, of the Arabs, and all the Mahometans, at a much more inconvenient time of life.

## SECTION



## SECTION XVII.

*Of the Superstition of the Hindoos and others for the Cow, and also for the elements of Fire and Water.*

OF so much importance are many things relating to the *cow* in the Hindoo purifications, that I shall appropriate the greatest part of this section to the subject; subjoining some particulars concerning two other great instruments of mental purgation, viz. *fire* and *water*.

It is not easy to give a satisfactory account of the excessive veneration the Hindoos have for the *cow*. There are many other animals, at least nearly, as useful, the *sheep* for instance, for which the Hindoos profess no particular regard; whereas on this principle it ought to have its share; and the origin of this superstition is so remote, that we have no means of tracing it. That the Hindoos, and other very ancient nations, equally ignorant of the constitution and laws of nature, should entertain the opinion of there being something divine in the elements of *fire* and *water*, both possessed of great powers of doing good or harm, is as easily accounted for as the worship of the sun, moon and stars,

stars, which have much, and were supposed to have more, influence on the earth. Fire also, being used in the purification of metals, and water in that of other things, they naturally enough became emblems of *purification* in general; and therefore, as partaking of divinity, might be imagined to have a spiritual as well as a corporeal use. But these considerations throw no light on the superstition of the Hindoos with respect to the cow.

Mr. Holwell says the cow is so much respected, because this is the last of the eighty-seven stages of purgation appointed for fallen spirits, immediately preceding their transmigration into the body of a man, p. 50. But then the form immediately preceding that of the cow, should have some proportional share of respect shewn to it, which is by no means the case.

This respect for the cow we also find among the ancient Egyptians. According to Plutarch the cow was considered by them as the image of Isis. (*De Iside, &c.*) Apuleius, describing the Isiac procession, says the cow was the fruitful image of the goddess, the mother of all \* And according to Ælian,

——\* Cujus vestigium continuum sequebatur bos, in erectum levata statum. Erat et bos omniparentis deæ secundum simulacrum, quod, residens humeris suis, proferebat unus é ministerio beato, gressu gestuoso.

Ælian, as quoted by Mr. Bryant, the object of adoration, at three cities of Egypt, was a heifer or cow. (*Mythology*, vol. 2, p. 415) The Syrians also had the cow in great reverence, *ib.* p. 422.

The modern Parfi's, following, no doubt, the ancient Persians, never kill or eat a cow, or bull. With them also, as with the Hindoos, the urine of a cow is considered as a great purifier. They wash in it, and sometimes drink it. (*Tavernier*, vol. 1, p. 491, &c.)

The probability is, that the philosophers who framed the Egyptian and Hindoo systems imagined the cow to be a suitable emblem of the attributes of some deity, as the bull was of others. Leaving this speculation, I shall proceed to recite some of the more curious articles of those Hindoo penances in which the cow is concerned; and they are only a few that might be collected; and let my reader consider that if it be disgusting, as it certainly is, to read them, how much more it must be to practice them. Let him also consider whether the Hebrews would have been any gainers by changing their institutions for those of the Hindoos. If I were to enjoin the following penance, it should be on those who, like Mr. Langles, prefer the latter to the former.

“ For stealing what might be eaten, or what might be sipped, a carriage, a bed, or a seat, roots, flowers,

flowers, or fruit, an atonement may be made by swallowing the five pure things produced from a cow, milk, curds, butter, urine, dung. (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 330.) Eating for a whole day the dung and urine of cows, mixed with curds, milk, clarified butter, and water boiled with *cusa* grass, and then fasting entirely for a day and a night, is the penance called *Santapana*," *ib.* 336.

The following is a slight penance for a small and involuntary fault. "He who has made any excretion being greatly pressed, either without water near him, or in water, may be purified by touching a cow," *ib.* p. 335.

If a cow dies, Mr. Holwell says, vol. 2, p. 24, it is reckoned a mark of God's anger, and the owner is thereby warned that when he dies he will be consigned to the lowest region of punishment. Hence there is not only great lamentation on the death of a cow or a calf, but the owner will sometimes, on such an event, undertake a pilgrimage of three years, forsaking his family, friends and relations.

It is a rule with the Hindoos that nothing must be left of the sacrifice *fradha* (which is to the manes of their ancestors) and when the company present cannot consume all that is offered, the *Institutes of Menu* say, "Let him cause a cow, a priest, a kid, or a fire, to devour what remains of the cakes, or let him cast them into the water," p. 85.

Much



Much use is made of the ashes of cowdung in the Hindoo ritual. "they are thought to be of a holy nature," says F. Bouchet, "and the Hindoos sprinkle their foreheads, and both their shoulders and breasts with them every morning. Those ashes are daily offered to the gods, and the Joguis seldom fail to have a good stock of them, in order to distribute them among their devotees, who always reward them very liberally with alms. The Joguis also affect to cover their faces and bodies with these ashes, and also scatter them over their idols. In the courts of several princes certain persons are appointed to present these ashes diluted with a little water, and laid on the leaves of the Indian fig-tree. This ceremony is performed publicly, and in the morning, in order that the devotees may partake of this salutary unction" (*Religious Ceremonies*, p. 391.) Whenever the king, or Samorin, of Calicut goes to pay his devotion in the pagod, all the way in which he passes is purified with fresh cowdung. This being done, two women walk before him, carrying two vessels full of this cowdung, diluted with water, and sprinkle it before him, ib.

In Malabar this purifying water is sprinkled on the forehead, as a preservative against misfortune, on a great annual festival, and the ceremonies used in preparing and using these ashes are curious. They are thus related by a Malabarian. "We take a

cow

cow all over black, and fed not with grass, but with green straw, and take her dung, and repeating some formulary of prayers we form it into lumps, and during four or five days dry it in the shade, and then in the sun, till it is hardened. Then they (the bramins) take it to a holy place called *Tschinadalan-gol*, and lay a great deal of chaff in that place, and put fire to it, and when the fire is quenched, they take the ashes in a vessel, and with some formulary of words they sprinkle it with water, and stir it, and sift it three times thro' a cloth, and make it again into lumps, which they dry, and season with all sorts of odoriferous flowers, and bring before their idol, and make use of it in all sorts of offerings. This is *dirunamun*, or ashes prepared by the bramins." (*Phillips Account of Malabar*, p. 105.)

The manner of using this water is as follows. "First the man washes all his body with great devotion, then takes the ashes in his hand, reciting devoutly the prayer *Nanoatschivain*, and other forms learned of their priests, and likewise takes up in his hand some drops of water, and washes his body with it, repeating a form of prayer. If it be in the morning, he turns his face towards the East, and if in the afternoon towards the West. Then he takes the ashes in both hands, and rubs them together, directing his thoughts in the mean time to God, and besmears his head with it, thinking of the

the god *Tchiven* in particular, and besmears his forehead with the same mixture. The third time he directs his thoughts to RUDDIREN,\* and anoints his breast. The fourth time he thinks of Vichnou, and anoints the navel. The fifth time he anoints his back, addressing his contemplation to Bruma, besmearing likewise his neck, knees and arms. This anointing is to keep off *Emadudakol*, or the messenger of hell, who comes to fetch away the dead, which is believed to be effectually done if he repeats the prayer which he has learned of the priest twenty times. When this is done, he sings a hymn in praise of some idol which he has chosen for the object of his devotion, either in his own house, or by the river side," *ib. p. 108.*

(In the books of Moses, (Num. xix.) directions are given to prepare a water of purification with the ashes of a red heifer, which may be compared with this similar practice of the Hindoos. The heifer was to be all red, a colour held in abhorrence by the Hindoos, as it was by the Egyptians, and cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet wool, were to be burned along with it. The whole of the heifer was

\* There is perhaps some mistake in this, since *Ruddiren*, is only another name for the deity that is called *Tchiven*, *Chib*, or *Sieb*, the third in the Hindoo system; tho' they might think it of use to meditate on the different names of the same god.

was to be burned, and not the dung only, and the ashes, dissolved in water, were to be used for the purpose of purification, after pollution occasioned by the touch of a dead body. I own I am not able to assign reasons for the several articles of this ritual, but the particulars of which it consists are much fewer than those of the Hindoos, and have in them much less that has the appearance of being arbitrary; and the use of the water was much more simple. In general much more use was always made of symbols in the East than with us, and both *water* and *ashes* are natural symbols of cleansing, because they are used for that purpose. The choice of a red heifer was probably in opposition to the idea of the heathens, who abominated that colour, and preferred black. *Cedar wood* and *hyssop* were used as cleansers of wounds, as was the plant *coccus* which was used for dying scarlet or purple. All the articles, therefore, bore some relation to the purpose of cleansing. Why all the persons employed in the preparation of these ashes should be considered as *unclean*, I do not see.

Such being the veneration which the Hindoos have for cows, we do not wonder at the penances enjoined for killing them, tho' they may be thought disproportionate to the crimes. I shall, as one of the most curious articles in the Hindoo system, copy what follows on the subject in the Institutes of

Menu



Menu, p. 322. "He who commits the smaller offence of killing a cow without malice must drink for the first month barley corns boiled soft in water, his head must be shaved entirely, and covered with the hide of the slain cow. He must fix his abode on the late pasture ground. He may eat a moderate quantity of wild grains, but without any factitious salt, for the next two months, at the time of each fourth repast, on the evening of every second day, regularly bathed in the urine of cows, and keeping his members under controul. All day he must wait on the herd, and stand quaffing the dust raised by their hoofs. At night, having servilely attended, and stroked, and saluted them, he must surround them with a fence, and sit near to guard them. Pure, and free from passion, he must stand while they stand, follow them when they move together, and lie down by them when they lie down. Should a cow be sick, or terrified by tigers, or thieves, or fall, or stick in mud, he must relieve her by all possible means. In heat, in rain, or in cold, or while the blast furiously rages, let him not seek his own shelter, without first sheltering his cows to the utmost of his power. Neither in his own house, or field, or floor for treading out grain, nor in those of any other person, let him say a word of a cow which eats corn or grafs, or of a calf which drinks milk. By waiting on a herd according to these

these rules, for three months, the slayer of a cow atones for his guilt. But his penance being performed, he must give ten cows and a bull; or his stock not being so large, must deliver all he possesses to such as best know the Veda."

For killing a cow with malice there is not any mode of expiation whatever. The murderer must suffer death.

Of the purgatory power of *fire* nothing need be added, after what has been related of the burning of widows with the bodies of their husbands, and of some men being laid on the funeral pile before they are quite dead. It is not, however, common fire, or that which is used for culinary purposes, that has this virtue. Mr. Wilkins informs us that the bramins are enjoined to light a fire at certain times, and that it must be produced by the friction of two pieces of wood of a particular kind; that with a fire thus procured their sacrifices are burned, the nuptial altar flames, and the funeral pile is kindled, (*Sketches relating to the history, &c. of the Hindoos*, vol. 1, p. 234.)

Their observances relating to *fire* are numerous, and several of them have been noticed. I only add here the following directions given to a student in the Institutes of Menu. "Having taken a legal staff to his liking, let the student thrice walk round

the fire from left to right, and perform according to law the ceremony of asking food," p. 23.

On the subject of purification by *water*, I shall be more particular; having noted more circumstances of their superstitious respect for this element.

I have given an account of persons chusing to die in rivers, especially the Ganges, on the idea that the soul passing thro' the water, as it leaves the body, is purged from its impurities. One of the travellers who describes this says, that "they who are at a great distance from the Ganges satisfy themselves with drinking a little of the water before they die, and believe that they are purged from all their sins by so doing. People," he says, "come from remote places to carry it to their own country, and furnish their pagoda's with it. I once, he says, saw pass thro' Pondicherry, which is at least three hundred leagues from it, a little caravan of these devotees, who had many pots garnished with rattan, and filled with the water of the Ganges. These poor wretches guarded them with great care, and extraordinary respect, and they had still a great way to go before they got home."

"They have not only," he adds, "a veneration the Ganges, which they always regard as most holy, no less than a deity, but they reverence  
rivers

rivers in general; and the devotees among them take care before they put their feet into the water to take some of it, and wash their hands, making at the same time a short prayer." This custom, he observes, is very ancient, and recommended by Hesiod. (*Agreement of the Customs of the East-Indians with those of the Jews*, p. 54.)

The ceremony of bathing in rivers, and the prayers which are used on that occasion, are thus described by Mr. Lord. "The bramin first daubs the man over with mud, and then says aloud, O Lord this man is dirty and impure, like the mud of this river; but as water can cleanse this dirt, do thou free him from his sin. He then plunges three times into the river, at the same time throwing into it a certain quantity of rice, by way of offering, and after this the bramin gives him absolution," p. 84. F. Bouchet, also says that it is the belief of the Hindoos that bathing in certain rivers will infallibly wash away every sin, that it not only cleanses the body, but purifies the soul, (*Religious Ceremonies*, p. 383.

This veneration for water, as well as fire, was as great among the ancient Persians, and continues to be so with the modern Parfi's. Herodotus says that the Persians, never spit, or make water, or wash themselves, in a river, nor throw any ordure into it, lib. 1, sec. 138. Water consecrated with certain



tain ceremonies is by the Parſi's called *Jafhtee water*, and is ſuppoſed to have a particular virtue with reſpect to the ſoul, (*Account of Zendaveſta in the Annual Register for 1762, p. 117.*)

Niebuhr ſays the modern Parſi's never extinguish a fire by blowing it out, leſt they ſhould pollute the purity of that element by their breath. In the travels collected by Delaporte it is ſaid they employ earth, but never water, to extinguish fire; and that the greateſt miſfortune that can befall them is to let the fire in the houſe go out, ſo as to have occaſion to get more from their neighbours, vol. 3, p. 102.

With the Hebrews there was a fire kept conſtantly burning for the purpoſe of ſacrificing, becauſe there was conſtant uſe for it, but fire in general, as one of the elements of nature, was never conſidered by them as an object of veneration. With reſpect to water, alſo frequent bathing was enjoined them, but they had no idea of the ſanctifying nature of water, as affecting the mind. There was no concourſe of people to bathe in the river Jordan, or any particular river, as having more virtue than another.

The Iſraelites were likewise free from the ſuperſtition of pilgrimages on that, or on any other account. They were required to reſort to one place at their public feſtivals, but it was for the obvious  
 purpoſe

purpose of preserving the unity of the nation, and the national worship; and the whole country being of no great extent, this intercourse was easily preserved. There was nothing of superstition in this, because it was not always to the same place. In the wilderness the place of worship was a moveable tabernacle, in Palestine it was first at Shiloh, and afterwards at Jerusalem, that place being the most convenient, as being the metropolis of the country.

Mr. Sonnerat says, vol. 1, p. 272, the Jews ascribed a divine virtue to the *fountain of youth*, but he refers to no authority for this strange assertion, nor does he say where this extraordinary fountain was. One would think that he had been reading the Arabian Tales, and mistook that book for the Bible.

Mr. Boulanger says, "religion must have rendered the fountain of Siloe respectable by the Hebrews because it was near that fountain that they went to consecrate their kings. See," he says "2 Kings i. 28." Now the only mention of the consecration of any king near that place was that of Solomon, and no mention is made of the fountain, or of any water, on the occasion. It is only said that they went to *Gihon*, and in the maps of Jerusalem, there is both a hill and a fountain in that place, and the fountain is supposed to be the same that is elsewhere

where called *Siloë*. Solomon was anointed with oil, but no intimation is given of the sacredness of the place in which the ceremony was performed, whether it was on the hill, or in the valley. It is probable they went out of the city with no other view than to prevent the transaction being known to Adonijah and his friends, and to return in a princely cavalcade when the ceremony was over; and for any thing that appears in the history, any other place near the city would have answered the purpose just as well. On such slight foundations do many unbelievers found their objections to the religion of the Hebrews, in order to make out something like a similarity between it and what must be allowed to be absurd in that of the heathens, when no two things which had the same object could be more unlike, the one being a perfect contrast to the other.

## SECTION

SECTION XVIII.

*Of the licentious Rites of the Hindoo and other ancient Religions.*

THE serious consequences of adopting erroneous principles, even such are commonly called *metaphysical ones*, seemingly the most remote from practice, is perhaps in nothing more apparent than with respect to the ideas which were in early ages entertained concerning *nature*, when its attributes came to be objects of worship. As there must be a concurrence of *male* and *female* powers for the production of all living creatures, it was supposed that, in the great productive powers of nature, there must be both male and female qualities. The Egyptians had this idea, and accordingly several of their principal deities were said to be both male and female. And having little idea of delicacy, which is the product of refinement, they represented those powers by the figures of the parts of generation. But the constant exhibition of these figures in their religious worship could not but lead to much lewdness, first as an act of religion, acceptable to their gods, and then in common life; tho' this might be



be far from the intention of those who formed the plan of the popular worship.

Hence, however, it is that, in the ancient heathen religions, we find rites of the most opposite nature, the extreme of severity and cruelty in some, and the extreme of indecency and sensual indulgence in others. This is well known to have been the case in Egypt, which was the mother of religion, and of science, to a great part of the Western world. We cannot without the utmost disgust and horror think of what, according to the testimony of Herodotus, whose authority in this case cannot be questioned, women did before the bull Apis, and especially with the goat that was worshipped at Mendes, to say nothing of the peculiarly indecent manner in which he says that, in their religious processions, they carried the *phalli*, and of their behaviour; when, in some of their festivals, they went in boats along the Nile, and exhibited themselves to the inhabitants of the villages on the borders of it, lib. 2. The Nile itself, according to the testimony of christian writers, was worshipped with the most obscene and execrable rites, even Sodomitical practices, (*Jablonski*, vol. 2, p. 172. *Eufibii Vita Constantini*, lib. 4, cap. 25.)

The idea that Plutarch gives us of the Egyptian rites is sufficiently disgusting. "Many of their religious solemnities," he says, "were of a mournful,

ful cast, and celebrated with much austerity. Some of their festivals and direful sacrifices were considered as unfortunate and mournful days, and were celebrated by eating raw flesh, torn with men's nails. On other days they fast, and smite their breasts, and in several places filthy and indecent words are used during the sacrifices," (*De Iside et Osiride.*) "In their festivals and processions the greater part," he says, "act ludicrous things, both speaking and thinking words of the most wicked and lewd meaning, and that even of the gods themselves. But when they consult their oracles, they are advised to have pious thoughts in their hearts, and words of good sound in their mouths," *ib.*

No revels of the most irreligious persons could be more extravagant and indecent than the festivals of Bacchus; and the same people who sacrificed men, and even their own children, had places appropriated to prostitution, even of both sexes, adjoining to their temples, the profits arising from which were a part of their revenues.

The Hindoo religion is little, if at all, less exceptionable than the ancient Egyptian in this respect. "Nothing," says Mr. De la Croze, "is more revered by the Hindoos than the *lingam*. Their most solemn worship is presented to their gods in this form, vol. 2, p. 275. Lighted lamps

are continually burning before it, in the inmost recesses of their temples, surrounded by other lamps with seven branches, like that of the Hebrews. Besides those in the temples, they have small ones of stone or crystal, which they hang to their necks, and fasten upon their heads. To these they address almost all their prayers, and frequently have them buried with them," p. 277.

Captain Campbell, after describing the lascivious dancing of Hindoo girls, who get their living by it, says (*Journey over land to India*, p. 378,) "that such inticements to vice should make a part of the system of any society is to be lamented; yet in all ceremonies and great occasions, whether of religious worship, or domestic enjoyment, they make a part of the entertainment; and the altars of their gods, and the purity of the Magic rites, are alike polluted by the introduction of the dancing girls. The impurity of this custom, however, vanishes when compared with the hideous practice of introducing dancing boys."

He gives the following account of the celebrated pagoda of Jaggernat, which he calls "a curious and grotesque monument of superstitious folly." It is," he says "an immense barbarous structure, of a kind of pyramidal form, \* embellished with devices

\* Mr. Hamilton describes this temple as in the form of a large cask, forty or fifty yards high, bulging out in the

devices cut in stone work, not more singular than disgusting, Christian idolaters, in forming types and figures of divine beings, always endeavour to represent them as proportionate to the divine nature as human skill can make them. These pagans, on the contrary, in forming their idols, cast out every vestige of beauty, every thing that by the consent of mankind is supposed to convey pleasing sensations, and in their place substitute the most extravagant and unnatural deformity, the most loathsome nastiness, and the most disgusting obscenity. It is not in language to convey an adequate idea of their temples and idols; and if it was, no purpose could be answered by it but the excitement of painful and abominable sensations."

"To keep pace with the figures of their idols a chief bramin, by some artificial means (by herbs I believe) has brought to a most unnatural form, and enormous dimensions, that which decency forbids me to mention; and the pure and spotless women, who from their infancy have been shut up from the sight of men, even of their brothers, are brought to kiss that disgusting and shapeless monster, under the preposterous belief that it promotes fecundity,

middle, with the figure of a bull cut in stone projecting from the middle of it. (*New account of the East-Indies*, vol. 1, p. 386.)



ib. p. 412. Tavernier mentions the same abominable custom, vol. 1, p. 423. As also does Alexander Hamilton in his account of the East-Indies, vol. 1, p. 152.

In this pagoda, Capt. Campbell says, stands the figure of Jaggernat, but it is nothing more than a black stone, of an irregular pyramidal form, having two rich diamonds in the top by way of eyes, and a nose and mouth painted red. For this god, he says, five hundred priests are employed in spoiling food.

Every pagoda, says La Croze, has a certain number of prostitutes annexed to it, dedicated to its use by pompous and solemn ceremonies. They chuse the handsomest, and educate them in such a manner, that when they come to a proper age they may bring the greatest gain to the temple by the price of their prostitution. They can never marry, or leave the idol; and their children, if they have any, are also dedicated to it, p. 313, &c.

Some, says Mr. William Chambers, devote their own children to this profession. This is customary in the Decan, but not with the Hindoos of Bengal or Indostan proper. He says this custom was probably derived from the religion of Budda, (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 2, p. 51.) But almost all the ancient heathen religions had the same

same custom. It is described at large by Herodotus, as it was practiced at Babylon in his time; and it is frequently alluded to in the Old Testament. Lucian, in his *Treatise on the Syrian goddesses*, says that those women who refuse to cut off their hair on her festival must prostitute themselves during one day; and that what they receive on that account is given to the goddesses for a sacrifice. In Malabar it is reckoned meritorious to bring up girls, who are commonly bastards, for the service of the temples, and they are taught music and dancing. When they are of a proper age, they go thro' the ceremony of a marriage to the god, (*Philips Account of Malabar*, p. 101.)

Whether it was owing to customs of this kind, or a natural simplicity of manners that prevailed in early times, the writings of the ancient Greeks and Romans have not the decency of modern compositions. But it is probable that the writings of the Hindoos are still more censurable in this respect, since Mr. Langles, the admirer of this system, has not thought proper to translate certain passages of the *Hitopades*, because he says, p. 177, "they are so gross that it is not possible to give them a decent colouring."

In many countries it has been thought necessary to connive at prostitution; and certain places in cities have been allowed where prostitutes might live unmolested;

unmolested ; but in no part of the world are such indications of its being considered as a lawful occupation as in Hindostan. For there, in case of a debt, the creditor cannot take from a prostitute any thing that is necessary to set off her person to advantage, any more than he can take from another the necessary implements of his trade. (*Code of Gentoo laws*, p. 273.)

To Hebrew women prostitution was in all cases absolutely forbidden ; but, in allusion to the practice of the heathens, more especially as an act of religion. Their custom of having places of prostitution in the precincts of their temples is more than once alluded to in the writings of Moses, but always with the greatest abhorrence, as unworthy of the purity of the religion that he taught, Deut. xxiii. 18. *Thou shalt not bring the hire of a harlot into the house of the Lord thy god. There shall be no harlot of the daughters of Israel, nor a Sodomite of the sons of Israel.* Tho' there are in the scriptures such expressions as we should not now chuse to make use of, they do not go beyond that simplicity which is perfectly consistent with the greatest purity of manners ; and to this the greatest possible attention was paid in every part of the system. In the New Testament the customs of the heathens in these respects are frequently alluded to, but always with cautions to christians to keep at the greatest distance from them.

SECTION

SECTION XIX.

*Of Charms and Fortunate Times.*

THE deplorable ignorance of the heathen world in general, in early ages, is in nothing more apparent than in their belief and practice with respect to *charms*, or their opinion that wonderful effects may be produced by the use of certain forms of words, and ceremonies, which, however, have not the least connection with them, or dependance upon them. A great part of all the heathen religions consisted of things of this nature; since they believed that the powers of superior beings, residing in the heavenly bodies, and other parts of nature, which were the objects of their worship, might be effectually engaged, and made subservient to them by this means.

The religion of the Greeks, derived in a great measure from Egypt, and also that of the Romans, derived from the Hetruscans, abounded with things of this nature, while that of the Hebrews was so intirely free from every thing of the kind, that to persons acquainted with antiquity, and indeed with human nature, there can hardly be a more striking  
proof



proof of the divine origin of their religion. How came this one nation to be so great an exception from all others in this respect? How came they to have nothing at all of that which to men of sense at this day must make all other ancient religions perfectly contemptible? What advantage can it be said that Moses, or any of his nation, had for so much superior good sense, and so much more knowledge of the powers of nature. The Israelites must naturally have been as prone to this wretched superstition as other people, and their addictedness to it actually appears by their readiness to abandon their own religion, which was free from it, and to embrace that of their neighbours, which was loaded with it: Thus we read concerning king Mannasseh, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 2. *He did evil in the sight of the Lord, like unto the abominations of the heathen, whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel. For he built again the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down, and he reared up altars for Baal, and made groves, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them. And he caused his children to pass thro' the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom. Also he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizzards.*

We see here the intimate connection that always subsisted between idolatry and these superstitious

tious observances. They make an essential part of all the heathen religions. Let us now hear what Moses says with respect to them, Deut. xviii. 10. *There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass thro' the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizzard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination to the Lord, and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee. Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God. For these nations whose country thou shalt possess hearkened unto observers of times, and to diviners; but as for thee, the Lord thy God hath not suffered thee so to do.* Do we not here see a most striking difference between the opinions and practices of the heathens and those of the Hebrews; and need I say on which side is reason and good sense, and on which an absurd superstition, the offspring of the most deplorable ignorance.

A belief in charms is not confined to the vulgar among the Hindoos. It is authorized by their sacred books, and professed by their learned bramins. The Veda's contain the most horrid forms of incantation for the destruction of enemies, (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 2, p. 106.) The *Gayatri*, so often mentioned already, is used in

one of these charms, consisting as we are told, of verses aptly fitted and variously measured, *ib.* p. 100. The *Yantra*, as we are informed by a chief magistrate of Benares, (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 1, p. 92,) is a scheme of figures, which they write, with a belief that their wishes will be accomplished by it. *Tantra*, is a medical preparation by the use of which they think that all injuries may be avoided. They are said to rub it on their hands, and afterwards to touch red hot iron without being burned, *ib.*

The learned pundits, who compiled the Code of Gentoo laws, say, p. 118. "The magistrate shall keep many intelligent physicians, or men who cure by spells." The Institutes of Menu say, "Let the king eat lawful aliment, after it has been hallowed by texts of the Veda, repulsive of poison. Let him constantly wear with attention such gems as are known to repel venom," p. 107. In the same work we read that "a bramin will use without hesitation the powerful charms revealed by *Atharvan*, and by him to *Angiras*; for speech is the weapon of the bramins, and with that he destroys his oppressors," p. 311.

Some Hindoos in Malabar "carry about them a word consisting of five letters, signifying *praise to God*, and with these letters they pretend to perform many wonders. (*Phillips Account of Malabar*,

bar, p. 21. "They believe that by certain rites they can engage the assistance of some of their tutelary gods and goddesses, cure the headach, break the arm or leg of a man, deprive him of his senses, and even of his life," p. 148.

But the most curious account that I have any where met with concerning the power of charms is that which Mr. Richardson relates of the process by which the Parfi's expel the demon they call *Daroudj Nefoch*. It is in a dialogue between Ormusd, or the Supreme Being, and Zerdusht, or Zoroaster, who desires to be informed how a man may drive away this demon, supposed to have assumed the form of a fly, when he has got possession of the crown of the head. Ormusd directs him to wash the part, which will drive the fiend between the eyebrows: Thence he is driven by another ablution to the back of the head, thence to the ear, thence, in succession, to the nose, the mouth, and the chin; and at length to the left foot; when the following process is to be gone through. When the water has reached the top of the left foot it must be raised, letting the toe rest on the ground, while the under part of the right foot is washed. The demon then retires under the left foot. That being washed, he places himself under the toe. Then resting the sole of the foot on the ground, the toe must be raised, and those



those of the right foot washed. He then retires under the left foot, and when that is washed he is completely driven away, and retires towards the North, p. 234.

When men were ignorant of the true causes of events, and yet necessarily supposed that they must have *some* cause, they of course fixed on imaginary ones; and when the cause was not any thing that was visible to them, they supposed invisible agents to be concerned; and that they interposed at certain times, and in certain circumstances, rather than in others. Hence a great part of the religions of ancient nations consisted in superstitious observances respecting particular *times* and *circumstances*, on which they imagined good or bad success to depend. The religion of the Hindoos abounds with things of this nature; but I shall confine myself to the recital of a very few, as any person may see who shall peruse the *Institutes of Menu*.

All men naturally wish to live long and be happy, but few know how to secure these advantages. Let us then hear the wisdom of the East on this head. "Let not a man who desires to enjoy long life stand upon hair, nor upon ashes, bones, or, pots herds, nor upon seeds of cotton, nor upon husks of grain." (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 98.) Compare this with what we find in the psalms of David on the same subject, Ps. xxxiv. 12. *What man is he that desi-*  
*reth*

*reth life, and loveth many days that he may see good. Keep thy foot from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good, seek peace and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.*

The future happiness of a child is supposed by the Hindoos to depend on the prevailing influence of the planets at the time of its birth. This however is a circumstance that men cannot command ; but the time of giving a child its name they can, and they suppose that much depends upon this. On the tenth day after the birth of a child, the relations are assembled to give it a name, when the bramin examines the planets, and if they be found unfavourable, the ceremony is deferred, and sacrifices are performed to avert misfortune. (*Sketches relating to the history, &c. of the Hindoos*, vol. 2, p. 11.) On this subject the Institutes of Menu say, " Let the father cause to be performed on the tenth day after the birth the ceremony of giving a name, or on some fortunate day of the moon, at a lucky hour, and under the influence of stars with good qualities," p. 21.

Both the benedictions, and the imprecations, of certain persons have been thought to have a great effect; and contemptuously as the Hindoos think

think of women, they suppose that, in this respect, even they have great power. "On whatever house" say the Institutes of Menu, "the women of the family, not being duly honoured, pronounce an imprecation, those houses, with all that belong to them, utterly perish, as if destroyed by a sacrifice for the death of an enemy. Let those women, therefore, be continually supplied with ornaments, apparel, and food at festivals, and jubilees, by men desirous of wealth," p. 59.

The superstitious observances respecting the bramins are the most numerous, and fanciful, far beyond our western conception. I shall recite a few taken promiscuously from the Institutes of Menu. "If a bramin seek long life he must eat with his face to the East; if exalted fame, to the South; if prosperity, to the West; if truth, to the North, p. 23. What a bramin eats with his head covered, what he eats with his face to the South, what he eats with sandals on his feet, the demons assuredly devour," p. 82. Let not a Chandala, or a town boar, a cock, a dog, a woman in her courses, or an eunuch see the bramins eating. That which any one of them sees at the oblation to fire, at a solemn donation of cows, and gold, at a repast given to bramins, at holy rites to the gods, and at the obsequies to ancestors, produces not the intended fruit, p. 82. The boar destroys it  
by

by his smell, the cock by the air of his wings, the dog by the cast of a look, the man of the lowest cast by the touch," *ib.*

"Let no bramin gaze on the sun, whether rising or setting, or eclipsed, or reflected in water, or advanced to the middle of the sky. Over a string to which a calf is tied let him not step, nor let him run while it rains, nor let him look at his own image in the water. This is a settled rule, p. 94. By a mound of earth, by a cow, by an idol, by a bramin, by a pot of clarified butter, or of honey, by a place where four ways meet, and by large trees well known in the district, let him pass with his right hand towards them. Let him neither eat with his wife, nor look at her eating, or sneezing, or yawning, or sitting carelessly at her ease," *ib.*

The restrictions that bramins are under with respect to the voiding of their excrements are very numerous. Among them are the following. "Nor let him eject them looking at things moving, the wind, or at fire, or at a priest, or at the sun, or at water, or at cattle ; but let him void them with his face to the North, by night, with his face to the South ; at sun rise and sun set in the same manner as by day. Of him who urines against fire, against the sun, or moon, against a twice born man, a cow, or the wind, all the sacred knowledge would perish," p. 95.

A bramin



A bramin must never cut his own hair, or nails, nor even tear his nails with his teeth, *ib.* p. 95. "He who idly breaks clay, or cuts grass, or bites his nails, will speedily sink to ruin," p. 98.

As to prognostics of good or bad success, a great number of them, as observed by the Hindoos of Malabar, may be seen in Mr. Phillips's Account, p. 135. "A lucky day being first chosen, when he goes out of the door, he observes all that he meets. If he happen to sneeze he turns in the books of prognostication to the chapter of sneezing; if a crow croaks, to the chapter of crows, or birds. In general, it is a bad sign if a blind man, a bramin, or a washerwoman, meets a man, or a man with an empty panel, or when he sees an oil mill, or meets a man with his head uncovered, or hears a weeping voice, or sees a fox, or a cat, crossing the way, or a dog running on his right hand. When a potter, or a widow, meets a man it is a bad sign. When a man sprains his foot, or falls on his head, he consults those who profess science, and they give him the interpretation of the sign," p. 135.

The reason for these observances is to be looked for in the ideas which the ancients in general had of the interference of superior beings in the usual course of nature. Hence it was considered as a book, in which they thought they could read their inclinations

inclinations and designs. Hence they regarded a thousand different phenomena, such as the quivering of leaves, the crackling and colour of flames, the fall of thunderbolts, the flight or singing of birds, men's involuntary motions, their dreams, the motion of the pulse, &c. as intimations which the gods gave to wise men of their will. Hence came oracles, divinations, auspices, presages and lots, in a word all that rubbish of dark superstitions called at one time *religion*, and at another *Magic*. (*Northern Antiquities*, vol. 1, p. 110.)

Herodotus says the Egyptians had more prodigies than other people, and that they ascribed the art of divination to no mortal, but only to the gods, lib. 2, sec. 82, 83.

In the institutions of the Hebrews we find nothing of this kind, but on the contrary they are treated with deserved contempt, as they were observed by the heathen nations in their neighbourhood. And what could Moses know more than the Egyptians, or the Hindoos, whose superior knowledge in other respects is unquestioned? The Hindoos, from about the time of Moses, could calculate eclipses, and had attained the rudiments of other branches of knowledge, which made them be looked up to by all nations who were acquainted with them with the greatest veneration; and we are even now astonished at their attain-

ments in so early a period, while the Israelites were not, in the time of Moses, distinguished for knowledge of any kind. Whence then came their superior good sense with respect to their religious institutions? The religion of the wiser nation we see to be absurd in the extreme, while that of the rude and ignorant appears truly admirable at this day; and the more it is studied in this advanced age of the world, to the more advantage, I am confident, it will appear, especially when compared with systems of equal antiquity in the same part of the world.

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## SECTION XX.

### *Of Trial by Ordeal.*

**W**HEN nothing serious in the conduct of life depends upon erroneous opinions, we may smile at them, or when in consequence of them persons only give themselves needless trouble. But when their conduct towards others, in civil and even in criminal cases, is influenced by absurd notions, it is not a little alarming; and the history of all countries, especially ancient ones, shews  
of

of what importance it is to form a just judgment with respect to things which at first sight seem to bear no relation to practice. A superstitious respect for the elements of fire and water seems at first perfectly harmless, and while it only leads persons to bathe more than we think necessary, or with much trouble and expence keep up a fire for which we see no use, we are amused with them. But when we find that the same ideas which led to these harmless tho' troublesome practices, led likewise to the drowning and burning alive of innocent persons, we find that they deserve a serious examination.

From a veneration for the elements of fire and water, and an opinion of there being something of divinity in them, or attending them, they have been deemed proper tests of guilt or innocence. Neither fire nor water, it was thought, would hurt an innocent person, when appealed to as an evidence of guilt or innocence; and hence have come the various modes of trial which have obtained the appellation of *ordeals*, not only in cases in which credible testimony could not be procured, but even where it could; the judgment of these divinities being thought more safe than that of any man.

We now see the absurdity and mischievous consequences of this practice; but the experience of ages has not yet convinced the Hindoos of it, and  
trial



trial by ordeal is as much in use among them as ever. In the preface to the Code of Gentoo laws it is said that the trial by ordeal is one of the most ancient for the distinguishing criterion of guilt and innocence. The modes of it in Indostan are various, according to the choice of the parties, or the nature of the accusation, but the infallibility of the result is to this day as implicitly believed as it could have been in the darkest ages of antiquity.

In the *Asiatic Researches* there is a curious tract on the trial by ordeal, written by the chief magistrate of Benares, from which we learn, that there are nine modes of ordeal allowed by the Hindoo laws; and from considering them it will appear that there are only one or two of them in which an innocent person can have an equal chance of being acquitted. According to the first of these modes the person accused is, after many ceremonies, too tedious to recite here, weighed, and then, his accusation in writing being put upon his head, he is weighed again six minutes after; when, if he weigh any thing more he is deemed guilty, if less innocent. (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 2, p. 77.) In this case much will depend upon the weight of the paper containing the accusation, and the rest on his habit with respect to perspiration. A person dropically inclined would stand a very poor chance.

In another of the modes of ordeal the accused person is made to drink of water in which certain images have been washed; when, if he have any sickness within fourteen days his crime is considered as proved, p. 79. In this case the chance of acquittal is at least equal to that of condemnation if the person's health was good.

All the other modes are by water, fire, or poison, in such a manner as that an innocent person has but little chance of escaping unhurt; and yet one of their inspired legislators says, that tho' the theft or fraud could be proved by witnesses, the party accused may be tried by ordeal, ib. p. 82. And it is positively declared in the *Dherma Sastra*, and in the written opinions of the most respectable pundits, that "the hand of a man who speaks truth cannot be burned," ib. p. 88.

The Institutes of Menu give their full sanction to this mode of trial. "He whom the blazing fire burns not, whom water soon forces not up, \* and who meets with no speedy misfortune, must be held veracious in his testimony on earth." p. 204. Of this an example is given, "Of the sage Vatsa, whom a younger brother formerly attacked, as the  
son

\* We see here the great antiquity of trying witches by throwing them into water, when it was supposed that if they could not sink they were guilty.

son of a servile woman, the fire which pervaded the world burned not a hair, by reason of his perfect veracity," *ib.*

The translator of the *Hitopades*, after observing that a woman accused of infidelity to her husband is required to plunge her hand into a vessel of hot water, oil, or melted lead, and that if she be injured by it she must be condemned, p. 183, mentions as a thing of the same nature, the proof of adultery prescribed in the laws of Moses, Num. xviii adding, "these modes of trial have been one of the first articles of the jurisprudence of people half civilized," p. 185. But let the two cases be compared. As Mr. Langles has not done this, I shall endeavour to draw the comparison myself.

This was the only case in which any such mode of trial was had recourse to in the Hebrew system, and this was a case in which no evidence could be had, the husband being only able to allege his suspicions; and all that the accused wife had to fear was a real interposition of providence against her. She had nothing to apprehend from boiling water, hot oil, or melted lead, being only required to drink a little water containing some dust from the place in which she stood, which the priest took up in her presence, and that of her friends; and the priest may be supposed to have had no interest to serve by favouring either of the parties.

All

All the objection that can be made to the proceeding in these circumstances is that the woman's escaping unhurt was no proof of her innocence. But why should any person suffer against whom there was no evidence of guilt? In the Hindoo ordeal nothing but a miracle could save the accused, in this nothing but a miracle could injure her. Violent and unreasonable jealousy is very common in the East; and such a method as this of quieting the mind of the suspicious husband might be of great use. Besides, this case of ordeal was of a piece with the general plan of the Hebrew government, as it was immediately superintended by God himself, and his interposition promised in many more cases than this.

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## SECTION XXI.

### *Of various Kinds of Superstition.*

THE trial by ordeal is not the only case of superstition relating to courts of justice in the Hindoo system. The following among many others are deserving of notice.

An evidence in a court of justice, say the Gentoo laws, p. 112, must turn his face towards the East,



East, or North quarter. The same is required in the Institutes of Menu, p. 200.

The rules for estimating the degrees of guilt incurred by giving false evidence in different cases are not a little curious. "Hear, honest man," say the Institutes of Menu, p. 202, "from a just enumeration, in order, how many kinsmen in evidence of different sorts a false witness kills, or incurs the guilt of killing. He kills five by false testimony concerning cattle in general, ten concerning kine, a hundred concerning horses, and a thousand by false evidence concerning the human race. By speaking falsely in a cause concerning gold he kills the born and the unborn. By speaking falsely concerning land he kills every thing animated. Beware then of speaking falsely in a cause concerning land. The sages have held false evidence concerning water, and the possession and enjoyment of women, equal to false evidence concerning land; and it is equally criminal in causes concerning pearls, and other precious things formed in water, and concerning all things made of stone."

The penalty incurred by a false oath in case of a land mark is singular. "Let him be sworn," say the Institutes of Menu, "by the reward of all his good actions," p. 222.

There are cases, however, in which false testimony

mony even in a court of justice, is not censured. "In some cases," say the Institutes of Menu, p. 202, "a giver of false evidence from a pious motive, even tho' he know the truth, shall not lose a seat in heaven. Such evidence wise men call the *speech of gods*. Whenever the death of a man would be occasioned by true evidence, falsehood may be spoken. It is even preferable to truth. Such witnesses must offer as oblations to *Saraswati*, cakes of rice and milk, addressed to the goddess of speech; and thus will they expiate the venial sin of benevolent falsehood. Or such a witness may pour clarified butter into holy fire, according to the sacred rule, hallowing it with the texts called *cushmanda*, or with those which relate to *Varuna*, beginning with *ud*, or the three texts appropriated to the water gods," p. 203.

This *speech of the gods* farther says, p. 204. "To women at a time of dalliance, or on a proposal of marriage, in the case of grass or fruit eaten by a cow, of wood taken for a sacrifice, or of a promise made for the preservation of a bramin, it is no deadly sin to take a light oath." But what will the women say to this. It was fair, however, to apprize them of it, if indeed this be the case; for little care is taken of their instruction.

The Hindoos have many superstitious observances on the birth of a child. "Before the section

of the navel string a ceremony is ordained on the birth of a male. He must be made, while sacred texts are pronounced, to taste a little honey, and clarified butter from a golden spoon." (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 20.) "In the fourth month the child must be carried out of the house to see the sun. In the sixth month he should be fed with rice, or that may be done which by the custom of the family is thought most propitious," p. 21.

According to the Hindoos, the birth of a child has many very serious consequences with respect to the father, which I own I do not understand. "The husband after conception by his wife," say the *Institutes of Menu*, p. 246, "becomes himself an embryo, and is born a second time here below, for which reason the wife is called *jaya*, since by her (*jayatè*) he is born again. By the eldest son, at the moment of his birth, the father, having begotten a son, discharges his debt to his progenitors. The eldest son, therefore, ought to manage the whole patrimony. That son alone by whose birth he discharges his debt, and thro' whom he attains immortality, was begotten from a sense of duty. All the rest are considered by the wife as begotten from a love of pleasure," p. 258. Some, however, may think that this motive was as strong in the first instance as afterwards.

But the advantage of having a son is greater than  
has

has yet been intimated. "By a son a man obtains victory over all people. By a son's son he enjoys immortality, and afterwards by a son of that grand-son he reaches the solar abode. Since the son delivers the father from the hell named *put*, he was therefore called *puttra* by Brahma himself, p. 363. Between the son of his son and the son of his daughter there subsists in this world no difference; for even the son of a daughter delivers him in the next world, like the son of his son," *ib.*

The advantage of having children with respect to a future state is likewise declared in the following passage of the Institutes of Menu. "By studying the Veda, by religious observances, by oblations to fire, by the ceremony of *traividia*, by offerings to the gods, and manes, by the procreation of children, by the five great sacraments, and by solemn sacrifices, this human body is rendered fit for a divine state," p. 20.

The Parfi's also think marriage conducive to future happiness, and if the son or daughter of a rich man die before they are married, some person is hired to marry them after they are dead, (*Universal History*, vol. 6, p. 286.)

The following is a singular kind of Hindoo superstition mentioned by Mr. Holwell. "The Gentoos," he says, "have a superstitious veneration for the numerals *one* and *three*. A Gentoo never  
gives



gives or receives an obligation for an even sum. If he borrow or lend a hundred, or a thousand rupees, the obligation runs for an hundred and one, a thousand and one," &c. vol. 2, p. 121.

In this section of miscellaneous superstitions, I would observe that, like the ancient Egyptians, the Chinese and the Hindoos, have an abhorrence of red objects. This the Hindoos carry so far that when the Institutes of Menu allow a bramin to trade, if he cannot otherwise support life, he is absolutely forbidden to traffic in any sort of red cloth, whether linen or wollen, or made of woven bark. (*Dissertations relating to Asia*, vol. 1, p. 229.) P. Valle with some probability ascribes this aversion to red colours to their abhorrence of blood, ib. p. 44.

The Egyptians, Plutarch says, do not care to meet, or to converse with, men who have red hair, because they say Typhon was born of that colour. They think Osiris was black when he was born, and the bull *Mnevis*, which is kept at Heliopolis, and is sacred to Osiris, and said by some to be the sire of Apis, is of a coal black colour. They sacrifice, he says, to Typhon animals of a red colour; and if they had a single hair black or white they were deemed unfit for that purpose. For their maxim, he says, is that the animal sacrificed must not be one that is agreeable, but one that is disagreeable

ble to the god, such as contained the souls of ungodly and wicked men. (*De Ifide et Ofiride.*)

I shall close this section with an account of some curious superstitions of ancient heathen nations, especially such as relate to religion, collected from the writings of Plutarch; and they are but a small specimen of what might be collected from the best authorities: Let unbelievers look for any thing of this nature in the writings of Moses. Whatever the Hebrews had of this kind, it was borrowed from their wise neighbours.

When the Egyptians sacrifice to the sun they do not wear gold, or give food to an ass. (*De Ifide, &c.*) At Rhodes the cryer never enters the temple, or tomb of Ocridion. (*Greek Questions*) At Tenedos a piper must not go into the temple of Tenes, and Achilles must not be mentioned in that temple, ib. The Tuscans, and also Pythagoras, observed when they were risen to ruffle the bed clothes; they were not to leave the print of a pot in the ashes, they received no swallow into the house, never stepped over a besom, or kept in their houses animals that had hooked claws. (*Symposiums.*)

At a horse race on the ides of December at Rome, the horse that won was sacrificed to Mars. The tail was brought to a place called *Regina*, and the altar besmeared with the blood of it, but two companies,

panies, one going down the *Via Sacra*, and the other down *Saburra*, fought for the head. The Flamen *Dialis* was not allowed to touch meal, or leaven, or raw flesh, or ivy. A Roman priest was not allowed to touch, or to name, a dog, or a goat. *ib.* The Roman priests who had fores about them were forbidden to use divination, *ib.* He says the Latins worshipped the woodpecker, and strictly abstained from that bird. They would not allow their children to swear by Hercules within doors, but made them go out of doors to do it. The days after the Calends, Nones, and Ides, of any month were deemed unfit to take a journey in. They did not allow a new married woman to step over the threshold of the house, but the bridesmen lifted her over it. The Romans did not suffer the table to be quite cleared before it was taken away, but always left some victuals upon it. (*Roman Questions.*)

To these from Plutarch I shall only add the following. In May the Romans celebrated the festival of the *Lemures*, or ghosts of the dead, and then the temples were shut, and marriages intermitted, as fatal. (*Annual Register*, for 1761. p. 169.)

## SECTION

SECTION XXII.

*Of the Devotion of the Modern Jews.*

THE Jews, in their intercourse with various nations, have got much of the false philosophy and superstition which has prevailed in all ages, and in every part of the world; which shews that, if left to themselves, they would have had as much of it as any other people. But not only are their sacred books free from every thing of the kind, but their modern liturgies, and all their forms of prayer. They consist chiefly of the psalms, and of compositions on the same model, which breathe a spirit of pure and rational devotion, expressing the greatest veneration for the divine attributes and government, gratitude for the mercies of God, supplication for his favour, and submission to his will, with respect to all the events of life.

In the daily habits and practices of the Jews there is, no doubt, much of real superstition; but it is not of the same kind with that of the heathens, as it has no immoral tendency. They are trifling observances, such as our Saviour animadverted upon, too apt to supply the place of solid virtue, but not necessarily having this effect. In excuse  
for



for them they say, that the external actions serve to remind them of something relating to what is internal, as bathing to moral purity, &c. And if they pay any attention to the meaning of the words in their many forms, they must serve to keep up an attention to the Divine Being and his providence, and thereby greatly promote habitual devotion. They must lead them to *acknowledge God in all their ways*, reminding them of their constant dependance upon him and obligation to him. From their rising in the morning to their going to sleep, *God must be in all their thoughts*; the first and the last thing that is in their mouths, and it may be hoped in their minds, being prayers or rather benedictions, in acknowledgment of the goodness of God, and recommending themselves, and their nation, to his favour.

I shall just mention a few of their forms. As soon as they rise in the morning they say, *Blessed be thou, O Lord, our God, king of the world, who givest life to the dead, who givest sight to the blind, &c.* When they wash before prayer, or in obedience to any particular precept, they say, *Blessed be thou O Lord our God, king of the world, who sanctifiest us by thy precepts, and hast commanded us to wash, &c.*

If so many as ten Jews live in the same place, they do not content themselves with their private devotions,

devotions, but resort to their synagogue, or public school, three times a day; and it is a rule with them to speak of no business, to pay no visit, or even salute any person, till they have discharged this duty to God in the morning of every day. If ten be present, one of them reads the forms aloud, and the rest say *amen* to each.

At every action that they perform, whether they eat or drink, if they even smell any sweet odour, when they hear any precept of their law, or see any thing new and extraordinary, they pronounce an appropriated form of benediction. At every regular meal, the master of the house begins with repeating the 22d. psalm. *The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want, &c.* When he first takes the bread, he says, *Blessed be thou, O Lord, king of the world who bringest food out of the earth,* when he takes the wine, he says, *Blessed be thou, O Lord, king of the world who hast created the fruit of the vine.* When he takes fruit of any kind, he says, *Blessed be thou, O Lord, &c. who hast created the fruit of the tree.* In short, they think it ingratitude to enjoy, or make use of, any thing without acknowledging, in some short form of thanksgiving, that they receive it from God, the Lord of all. At the close of every meal, they use a longer form of thanksgiving, praying at the same time that God would have mercy upon Jerusalem, restore

the temple, and set up the kingdom of David in their time.

The methods they take to inspire, and keep up, a reverence for the scriptures are very effectual. The Pentateuch is written in fair and large characters on a roll of parchment, fitted up in the most ornamental manner. It is put into a bag of silk curiously wrought, preserved in a place of the synagogue set apart for the purpose, richly ornamented. When it is brought out, or carried back, it is done with great ceremony, and the children in the place are permitted to put their hands upon it; &c. This has the appearance of superstition, but the tendency and effect of it is to inspire an uncommon reverence for the book, and the law that it contains. They divide it into fifty two parts, and read one of them every sabbath, so as to go thro' the whole every year. At the same time they read certain portions of the writings of the prophets, and other canonical books. As soon as a child can speak, he is taught to read the scriptures in the language of the country in which they live, and they are taught the exposition of it, and the doctrine of their rabbins, as soon as they are capable of it. They are also taught the Hebrew language if they learn any thing more than the first rudiments of education.

Their observances with respect to the sabbath,  
and

and other festivals, &c. are, in many respects, trifling; but they are innocent, and the tendency of them all is to raise the thoughts to God, to remind them of his law, and his moral government, and especially to keep up their faith in his promises, that he would restore them to his favour, and speedily send the Messiah for their deliverance. All their devotions have no other object than the one true God, the creator and preserver of all things. They worship no angels, demons, or dead men. They consider it as a heinous sin to believe in, or to practice, any kind of divination, as astrology, geomancy, chiromancy, &c. but more especially necromancy, magic, or charms of any kind.

The Jews distinguish themselves by their charity to the poor, even those of other nations; and also by their tenderness for animals. They never torture or abuse any of them; and when they kill any of them for food, they do it so as to put them to the least pain, considering them as the creatures of God, *whose tender mercies are over all his works.*

This account is taken from *Buxtorfs Synagoga Judaica*, and *Leo de Modena, on the Ceremonies of the Jews*. The object of Buxtorf evidently was to expose the Jews to the contempt of christians, and he omits no opportunity of making reflexions, which have that tendency, discovering an illiberality



ty and malignity unworthy of a christian; but notwithstanding this, the perusal of his book has, in my opinion, a tendency to inspire all candid persons with a respect for the Jews, and shews the great superiority of their religion, and customs, to those of any heathen nation. Besides, the things that he turns into ridicule are their traditions, which are not regarded by the Karaites, who, tho' not the most numerous, are, however, a pretty considerable body of Jews.

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### SECTION XXIII.

#### *Of the Hindoo Doctrine of a future State.*

THE most important article in any religion is, no doubt, its doctrine concerning a *future state*, as a motive to the proper discharge of the duties of life, and a support under the troubles of it. In this respect, as well as with regard to the doctrine of one Supreme God, from whom all the inferior deities, and the whole universe, was derived, the system of the Hindoos has the advantage over that of any other ancient heathen nation. They almost all lost sight of the former great principle, and retained nothing of the latter that could have  
much

much influence on their conduct. Whereas we see, in fact, that the Hindoo doctrine of a future state, whimsical and arbitrary as it is, has, nevertheless, an unquestionable influence on their conduct; leading them to overlook all that they can suffer in this life, with a view to the bettering of their condition in a future one.

But it does not appear that either this or any other part of the system was ever promulgated with the appearance of proper *authority*; since no miracles, as far as we can find, were ever appealed to, as proofs that the person who taught it received it from God, and was by him commissioned to impart it to men. And nothing can be more destitute of natural probability than it is. It goes entirely on the arbitrary supposition, not only that men have souls distinct from their bodies, capable of action and enjoyment independently of them, but that they all existed in a prior state, and are destined, after a course of purgation here, to rise to their pristine condition, and finally to be reunited to the supreme mind, from which they and all other beings sprung.

I need not at this day, and in this part of the world, enter into argument to shew the futility of this system, how destitute it is of all probability, not being countenanced by any appearance in nature. The whole must have been the product not only

only of mere imagination, but of a very sportive one, as will be sufficiently evident when I come to bring into view the particulars of which it consists, as, in order to give a just view of the system, it will be necessary for me to do.

That particular defects of body, with which some persons are born, are considered as punishments for offences in a prior state, is evident from the following passage in the Institutes of Menu. "Some evil minded persons for sins committed in this life, and some for bad actions in a preceding state, suffer a morbid change in their bodies. A stealer of gold from a bramin has a whitlow on his nails, a drinker of spirits black teeth, the slayer of a bramin a marasmus, the violator of his *guru's* bed a deformity in the generative organs; a malignant informer has fetid ulcers in his nostrils, a false detracter stinking breath, a stealer of grain the defect of some limb, a mixer of bad wares with good some redundant member. A stealer of dressed grain has a *dyspepsia*, a stealer of holy words, or an unauthorized reader of the scriptures dumbness, a stealer of clothes leprosy, a horse stealer lameness, the stealer of a lamp total blindness, the mischievous extinguisher of it, blindness in one eye, a delighter in hurting sentient creatures perpetual illness, an adulterer windy swellings in his limbs. Thus, according to the diversity of actions, are  
born

born men despised by the good, stupid, dumb, blind, deaf and deformed, p. 313. To a man punished for past crimes by being born without a prepuce, let a man never give food at the sacred obsequies," p. 71.

As the Hindoos suppose all matter to be animated, even plants, as well as animals, they suppose them to be capable of recovering their former happy state. "Graminous plants, cattle, timber trees, amphibious animals, and birds which have been destroyed for the purpose of sacrifice, attain in the next world exalted births," p. 128.

This great advantage, however, it is evident they gain not by any thing done by them in this state of degradation, but by what was done with them by others, in the use that men make of them. But, in like manner, the Hindoos suppose that a man's ancestors may suffer in another world by what their posterity do in this. "Should the eater of *fradha* enter the same day the bed of a seducing woman, his ancestors must sleep for that month on her excrements." (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 84.) "If a bramin apply the seeds of *tila* to any purpose but food, anointing, and sacred oblations, he shall be plunged, in the shape of a worm, together with his parents into the ordure of dogs," ib. p. 300.

In order to give a just idea of the Hindoo doctrine



trine of a future state, it is necessary to consider what particular virtues are intitled to reward in it, and what those rewards are; as also what vices are punished in it, and in what manner.

That men who die in battle will attain to a happy state hereafter was an important article in the religion of the Northern nations of Europe, and it is so with the Mahometans. The same is the faith of the Hindoos, at least with respect to their princes. "Those rulers of the earth who, desirous of defending each other, exert their utmost strength in battle, without ever averting their faces, ascend after death directly to heaven," (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 170.) This will not be found in the writings of Moses, or in any part of the scriptures.

The great bulk of mankind cannot expect to attain to any thing more than a favourable transmigration into the bodies of some of the more noble animals, or such as generally meet with the best treatment in this world; but after being born a bramin, it is supposed that they are the nearest to the heavenly mansions. "A priest," say the *Institutes of Menu*, "who lives by those rules, who knows the ordinances of the Veda, who is freed from the bondage of sin, shall be absorbed in the divine essence, p. 122. That bramin who has duly attended his preceptor till the dissolution of his body, passes directly to the eternal mansions of God,

God, p. 41. That twice born man who shall thus, without intermission, have passed the time of his studentship shall ascend after death to the most exalted regions, and no more spring to birth in this lower world," p. 49.

The Hindoo transmigration is not only into the bodies of animals, but in some cases men may become vegetables, and even mineral substances. "For sinful acts mostly corporeal, a man shall assume after death a vegetable or mineral form; for such acts mostly verbal, the form of a bird or beast; for acts merely mental, the lowest of human conditions." (*Institutes of Menu*, p. 346.)

But the most complete system of transformations is contained in the following passage of the *Institutes of Menu*, which, on account of its extreme curiosity, I shall not abridge. "What peculiar bodies the vital spirit enters in this world, and in consequence of what sins here committed, now hear at large, and in order. Sinners in the first degree, having passed thro' terrible regions of torture, for a great number of years, are condemned to the following births at the close of that period. The slayer of a bramin must enter, according to the circumstances of his crime, the body of a dog, a bear, an ass, a camel, a bull, a goat, a sheep, a stag, a bird, a *chandala*, or a *puccasa*. A priest who has drank spirituous liquor shall migrate into the form of a

smaller or larger worm, or insect, of a moth, of a fly feeding on ordure, or of some ravenous animal. He who steals the gold of a priest shall pass a thousand times into the bodies of spiders, of snakes, and camelions, of aquatic monsters, or of mischievous bloodsucking demons. He who violates the bed of his father migrates a hundred times into the forms of grapes, of shrubs with crowded stems, or of creeping and twining plants, of carnivorous animals, of beasts with sharp teeth, or cruel brutes. They who hurt any sentient beings are born eaters of raw flesh; they who taste what ought not to be tasted, maggots, or small flies; they who steal, devourers of each other; they who embrace very low women become restless ghosts. He who has held intercourse with degraded men, or has been criminally connected with the wife of another, or stolen from a priest, shall be changed into a spirit called *Brachmaracshasa*. The wretch who thro' covetousness has stolen gems, pearls, or coral, or precious things, of which there are many sorts, shall be born in the tribe of goldsmiths, or among birds called *hemacara's* or *goldmakers*. If a man shall steal grain in the husk, he shall be born a rat; if a yellow mixed metal, a gander; if water, a *plava*, or diver; if honey, a great stinging gnat, if milk, a crow; if expressed juice, a dog; if clarified butter, an ichneumon, or weasel. If he  
steal

steal flesh meat, a vulture, if any sort of fat, the water bird *madgu*; if oil a *blatter*, or oil drinking beetle; if salt, a cicada, or cricket; if curds, the bird *valaga*; if silken clothes, the bird *tittifi*, if woven flax, a frog; if cotton cloth, the water bird *vaggada*; if exquisite perfumes, a musk rat; if potherbs, a peacock; if dressed grain, in any of its various forms, a porcupine; if raw grain, a hedgehog; if he steal fire the bird *vaca*; if a household utensil, an ichneumon fly; if died cloth, the bird *chacora*; if a deer, or an elephant he shall be born a wolf; if a horse, a tyger; if roots, or fruit, an ape; if a woman, a bear; if water from a jar, the bird *chataca*; if carriages, a camel; if small cattle, a goat. Women who have committed similar thefts incur a similar taint, and shall be paired with those male beasts in the form of their females," p. 353, &c.

As several of these punishments relate to the killing of animals, it is desirable to know how far their guilt extends; and in the same work we have the following information on the subject. "He who consents to the death of an animal, he who kills it, he who dissects it, he who buys it, he who sells it, he who dresses it, he who serves it up, and he who makes it his food; these are eight principals in the slaughter," p. 129.

Besides the punishment of transmigration, there  
are



are in the Hindoo system, as has appeared in some cases already, a variety of *hells* for the punishment of crimes; and in them the modes of suffering are various. The following is a specimen of what we are taught on this subject in the *Institutes of Menu*.

“He who receives a present from an avaricious king, and a transgressor of the sacred ordinances, go successively to the following twenty-one hells, *Tamifra*,” &c. &c. All these are distinctly named, and the last, *Lohangaraca*, is called “the pit of red hot charcoal,” p. 99.—“He who makes a marriage contract with the connubial fire, while his elder brother continues unmarried, the damsel thus wedded, the giver of her in wedlock, and the performer of the nuptial sacrifice, all sink to a region of torment, p. 74. As many mouthfuls as an unlearned man shall swallow at an oblation to the gods and to ancestors, so many red hot iron balls must the giver of the *śradha* swallow in the next world. That fool who having eaten the *śradha* gives the articles of it to a man of the servile class, falls headlong to the hell called *calasutra*,” p. 84.

The greatest of all crimes we have seen to be the injuring, and especially the killing, of a brahmin; and we have the following curious circumstances respecting that sin in the future world, according

According to the degrees of the guilt. "An evil hearted wretch, who thro' covetousness shall seize the property of the gods, or of bramins, shall feed in another world on the orts of vultures, p. 310. A twice born man who barely assaults a bramin with intention to hurt him, shall be whirled round about for a century in the hell named *tamisra*, but having smitten him in anger, and by design, even with a blade of grass, he shall be born in twenty one transmigrations from the wombs of impure quadrupeds. He who thro' ignorance of the law sheds blood from the body of a bramin, not engaged in battle, shall feel exquisite pain in his future life. As many particles of dust as the blood shall roll up from the ground, so many years shall the shedder of that blood be mangled by other animals in his next birth, p. 110. An assaulter of a bramin with intent to kill him shall remain in hell an hundred years; for actually striking him with like intent a thousand, p. 336. As many small pellets of dust as the blood of a bramin collects on the ground, for so many thousand years must the shedder of that blood be tormented in hell," *ib.* The Gentoo laws say that "he who resumes the religious foundation of a bramin, of a dewtah, or of any other person, will remain in hell a thousand years," p. 120.

The bramins themselves are not considered as impeccable, and I shall now recite from the Institutes

tutes of Menu, the punishments to which they are subject. "By censuring his preceptor unjustly, the student will be born an ass, by falsely defaming him a dog, by using his goods without leave a small worm, by envying his merit a larger insect or reptile, p. 43. Let no twice born man, who knows the law, and is not in urgent distress, eat flesh without observing this rule; for he, unable to save himself, will be devoured in the next world by those very animals whose flesh he has thus illegally swallowed, p. 127. A bramin who begs any articles for a sacrifice, and disposes not of them all for that purpose, shall become a kite, or a crow for a hundred years, p. 310. A bramin if he take a sudra to his bed, as his first wife, sinks to the regions of torment; if he beget a child by her, he loses even his priestly rank. His sacrifice to the gods, his oblations to the manes, and his hospitable attentions to strangers, must be supplied principally by her; but the gods and manes will not eat such offerings, nor can heaven be attained by such hospitality," p. 53.

Mr. Dow gives an account of the Hindoo doctrine of a future state very different from the preceding. According to his representation of it, p. 47, men first atone for their crimes in hell, where they remain for a space proportioned to the degree of their iniquities. Then they rise to heaven, to be rewarded

warded for a time for their virtues, and thence they will return to the world to re-animate other bodies. He farther says that, according to the doctrine of the Bedang, God has no passions but benevolence; and having no wrath, he never punishes the wicked, but by the pains and afflictions which are the natural consequence of their actions. The more learned bramins, he says, affirm that the *hell* which is mentioned in the Bedang is only intended as a bug bear to the vulgar, p. 54. This was the doctrine of the Greek philosophers. They said that God, being without anger, the wicked would not be punished after death. It is not, however, anger, but virtually benevolence, or a regard to the good of the whole creation, that requires the punishment of the wicked either here or hereafter.

Mr. Holwell also, contrary to all other accounts, which represent future punishment as in all cases finite, says, as from the *shaftah*, p. 52, that "whoever shall free himself by violence from this mortal body shall be plunged in *Onderah* for ever."

According to Mr. Phillips's account of the religion of Malabar, they who destroy themselves go neither to heaven nor hell, but stroll about, and become what are called *spirits*, under the power of the chief of the devils. It is also said that if any servant of Tshiven commits a heinous crime, he curses them, and they become devils, and appear  
under



under different shapes to deceive simple people, by exciting in their minds many unclean and extravagant thoughts. Sometimes they enter into men, and then they become demoniacs, and go about naked and mad, to disturb the neighbourhood, eating grass and raw flesh, p. 85. P. Della Valle also says, p. 45, that according to the Indians some very wicked men become devils. \*

Such is the faith of the Hindoos with respect to themselves. As to persons of other nations and religions, they will, according to P. Della Valle, p. 42, "if they live virtuously, after being purified various ways, be born Hindoos, and in this way arrive at paradise, and live with God; tho' in the beginning their souls were the greatest miscreants that ever lived."

The ancient Persians appear to have retained the belief of a resurrection, which I doubt not was a doctrine originally communicated to mankind, tho' the record of it is now lost. The writings of the Parſi's contained ſeveral particulars relating to the end of the world, and the resurrection. Zoroaster, in the *Zendaveſta*, expatiates on what is to happen at that time. "Then," he ſays, "the righteous and the wicked will paſs over a bridge; which ſeparates earth from heaven under the protection

\* The Egyptians believed that all eminent perſons become ſtars when they die. (*Plutarch De Iſide, &c.*)

tection of the dog, who was created as the common guardian of cattle. At that time the heat shall cause the mountains to flow like a river. The righteous, however, will feel but a gentle warmth, but the wicked will suffer by the heat, tho' they will at length be purified, and made happy." (*Annual Register*, for 1762, p. 110, &c.)

They do not bury or burn their dead, but expose them on places erected for the purpose, to be devoured by birds of prey; and observe which of the eyes is first picked out. If it be the right eye, they believe the deceased to be happy, and express great joy on the occasion; but if it be the left, they consider it as a bad omen with respect to the deceased, and are very sorrowful.

The Parſi's have a superstitious respect for dogs, but a great aversion to serpents, lizards, toads, frogs, ants, crabs, mice, rats, and especially to cats; being of opinion that they were created not by God, but by the devil, and that they are his executioners in the torment of the damned. They therefore endeavour to destroy as many of them as they can, thinking thereby to diminish the sufferings of those that are in hell. They believe, however, that at the end of the world they will all be released from torment, and go to paradise. *Tavernier*, vol. 1. p. 494, &c.

My readers are now, I hope, satisfied, if not

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fatiated,

fatiated, with respect to the Hindoo doctrine of a future state. For, sure, it must appear to be as destitute of dignity, as it is of authority; even more so than the paradise and hell of Mahomet, who borrowed his bridge from the religion of the Persians. How different, in all respects, is the doctrine of our scriptures on this important subject; in which tho' it is said by some unbelievers to have been derived from other oriental systems, we find nothing concerning the preexistence of human souls, or of their transmigrations after death, but only that, at a time appointed by God, the dead shall be raised, when all men will be rewarded or punished according to their works. But with respect to the particulars of which our future happiness or misery will consist, we are wisely left in ignorance.

At what time this great doctrine was first revealed to man, we have no certain knowledge. We find it among the Jews before the time of our Saviour, tho' no mention is made of it in the writings of Moses; and there are not many allusions to it in any of the books of the Old Testament. But Jesus was commissioned, and empowered, to publish it in the clearest and most satisfactory manner. For, after performing numerous miracles, in the presence of all his countrymen, his enemies never excluded, some of them being the raising the dead to life, he voluntarily surrendered himself

himself to his enemies, and after a public crucifixion (which could leave no reasonable doubt with respect to the reality of his death) he came to life again at the time that he had previously fixed, to the intire satisfaction of many hundreds of those who could not be mistaken with respect to his person, and who on his death had not that least expectation of the event. In my *Discourse on the Resurrection of Jesus*, I have shewn that, this most important fact was so circumstanced that the evidence of its truth could not have been stronger than it now is at this distance of time, on any supposed change of circumstances, according to the fairest rules for estimating the value of testimony. Whereas the Hindoo doctrine is both in the highest degree incredible in itself, and destitute of all external evidence whatever.

## SECTION



## SECTION XXIV.

*Concluding Reflexions.*

**I** conclude this comparison of the Institutions of Moses with those of the Hindoos, and other ancient nations, with some observations of a general nature relating to the evidence of revelation, which appear to me to be naturally suggested by the view that I have exhibited of the state of knowledge and religion in the early ages.

1. If we inquire into foundation of the Hindoo religion, we find it to be a perfectly baseless fabric. The only proper evidence of any truth beyond the natural powers of the human mind, that is such as men who had only the appearances of nature to reason from could not have discovered (and this is evidently the case with respect to many parts of this system) must be information received from beings who know more than man can attain to. And the only evidence of such supernatural information are such works as only beings superior to man can perform, that is, proper *miracles*; and it does not yet appear that any thing of this kind is so much as pretended to by the advocates for this system. It  
is

is only asserted, on the mere authority of the brahmins, the authors of the Hindoo sacred books, that their religion and laws were dictated by Brahma, the agent of the Supreme Being. But where is the evidence of this? What is there in the system itself, or the books which contain it, that exceeds the faculties of man; and what proof is alleged of the interference of Brahma, or any other being superior to man?

That the souls of men have preexisted, and were sent down into mortal bodies for offences committed in a prior state, is what a man may easily imagine, but it is not what any man can know. If, therefore, it be true, he must have learned it from some person who knew more of the matter than himself; and he that promulgated the doctrine should have given some evidence of his having had communication with such a being. Here the defect lies.

The sacred books of the Hindoos are, no doubt, very ancient; but that circumstance is no proof of a divine origin, to which they pretend. They are probably as old as those of Moses. But what the author of the Hindoo system did not, as far as appears, pretend to, Moses did. The promulgation of his laws was, according to his writings, accompanied with numerous miracles, of the most stupendous kind, miracles of which millions of persons

sons must have been witnesses; and they were on so large a scale, and of such a nature, that there could not have been any imposition in the case. The history of them was also committed to writing, and published, while the events were recent; so that no person in the whole nation appears to have entertained any doubt with respect to them, from that time to the present day. And yet this nation was far from having any predilection for the institutions that were thus prescribed to them. This appears abundantly from their frequent rejection of them, and the preference they gave to those of their neighbours.

There are, it is acknowledged, several articles in the institutions of Moses for which we are not able to assign satisfactory reasons. But this cannot be thought extraordinary, considering that their antiquity is so great, and that they were adapted to a state of manners, opinions, and other circumstances of those remote times, with which we are but imperfectly acquainted. Neither are we able fully to satisfy ourselves with respect to many particulars in the system of *nature*, which, notwithstanding, we have no doubt came from God. And the more attention we give to both, the more reason do we discover for those circumstances which at first appeared the most objectionable. The better we understand them both, the more reason do

we see to admire them, and to be satisfied that they were ordained by a wisdom more than human. And the comparison that I have exhibited of the institutions of Moses with those of the Hindoos, which all my readers will allow to be merely human, will I hope set this argument in a peculiarly strong point of light.

The absurdity of the Hindoo system is as apparent as the superior wisdom of that of Moses; and yet in every other respect the Hindoo nation appears to much greater advantage. With them we find the rudiments, and more than the rudiments, of most of the arts and sciences, especially that of astronomy, of which most other nations were wholly ignorant. And yet while the Hebrews made no discoveries in science, they had a religion perfectly rational, and that of the Hindoos was absurd in the extreme. This, surely, is an argument of the internal kind in favour of the divine origin of the Hebrew religion, almost as irresistible as any argument from miracles.

2. It is universally acknowledged that, in the early ages of mankind, there was a period that was free from the polytheism and idolatry which afterwards prevailed. The sentiments and practices of men were such as we now think more rational, and less chargeable with superstition and folly. This, Mr. Holwell says, was the case with the Hindoos.

It



It was so with the Northern nations of Europe; and according to Clavigero the horrid rites of the Mexican religion had not been adopted many centuries before the arrival of the Spaniards. At the same time, it must be allowed, that men could not of themselves have had more knowledge in those early ages than they acquired afterwards. Their faculties being the same, and their observation and experience (the only natural sources of knowledge) being more confined, they must of necessity have known less than their posterity, who had greatly the advantage of them in that respect.

From this remarkable fact is it not evident, that in the period which preceded the polytheism and idolatry that overspread the world mankind had had instruction from some supernatural source, and, that they afterwards lost sight of it; that when they were left to themselves, and their own speculations, they corrupted the purer tenets which they had received from their ancestors, and adopted others from such deductions as they were able of themselves to make, from their observation of the course of nature? Then, contemplating such objects as the sun, the moon, the stars, and the earth, and conceiving them to be the immediate causes of the good or evil to which they were exposed, they confined their regards to them; and not being able to perceive the natural connection of causes and effects,

effects, they imagined that their influences, which we know to be *necessary*, were *voluntary*; that the sun emitted his heat, for beneficial or hurtful purposes, at his pleasure, or that of some intelligent being who resided, as they thought, in his sphere, and directed his motions; and that the moon, the stars, the planets, and even terrestrial objects, were also animated like themselves. Hence they were naturally led to the idea of endeavouring to gain the favour, and to avert the displeasure, of those divinities, to whose power they were subject, by such methods as were adapted to produce the same effect on themselves.

3. Having once got into this train of thinking, that polytheism into which all mankind went, and all the superstitious rites of the heathen religions, were the natural consequence. And nothing but a farther insight into the true causes of natural appearances than they could possibly have gained could have corrected the false judgments they had formed of things, and have brought them back to the simple and rational religion of their ancestors; consisting in the acknowledgment of one great Being, the cause of all things, and of all events; and that what they took to be primary, were only secondary causes, under the direction of the supreme cause of all. As such an insight into the works of nature was not attained by the Greeks, or Romans,

the most enlightened of the nations of antiquity, it is not at all probable that mankind in general would ever, of themselves, have gained so much knowledge as would have been sufficient for that purpose; or at least not till a period too remote for our contemplation.

The more men speculate on false principles, the farther they necessarily wander from truth and reason, and the more they involve themselves in intricate and absurd opinions; and if the subject be *religion*, in superstitious and absurd practices, fancying innumerable things to be causes, or indications, of events, which in reality have no relation to them. Hence came the whole business of divination, auguries, oracles, &c. &c. and hence also both human sacrifices, and rites of the most licentious nature. For what is there not that men, judging as they did of their gods by what they experienced and observed of men, might not imagine was adapted to please some or other of them. They even thought, as we have seen, that when they could not prevail upon them by fair means, they might succeed by having recourse to violence. Hence the beating of the sacred animals in Egypt, of the statues of some of the gods of Greece, and also the same treatment of those of some of the popish saints. For the same causes will ever produce the same effects.

If

If a few persons, more enlightened than others, could have acquired *knowledge* enough to see the folly of the vulgar superstition, it is not probable that they would ever have had *influence* (if they had had *public spirit* and *courage*) sufficient to correct the errors of the multitude, and break their inveterate habits. It is most probable that their first conviction of the absurdity of the prevailing superstition would have led them to the rejection of all religion, and to become atheists, rather than revert to the worship of the one Supreme Being. And never could they, from their observation of any appearances in nature, have been led to the belief of a future state.

Without revelation the degree of reason that God has thought proper to give to a man is so far from being sufficient for his moral instruction, that the most intelligent of the heathens, those who thought and reflected the most (as we may judge by their refinements in metaphysics, mythology and theology) as the Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Hindoos, have erred the most widely; having given into more absurd superstitions than the most stupid of mankind. For certainly the religion of the North Americans, and even that of the Negro's in Africa, is preferable to that of the civilized nations above mentioned, or that of the Mexicans and Peruvians



ruvians on the same continent, who yet were much farther advanced in the arts of life.

It is evident, therefore, that true religion, consisting in the knowledge and sole worship of the one true God, of the maxims of his righteous government, and of the destination of man to survive the grave, must necessarily have been derived from revelation. All ancient history, and every view of the present state of the world, and especially of the most enlightened inhabitants of it, as the Hindoos, and Chinese, must convince every competent and candid observer of this great truth. He must be satisfied that the world would never *by its own wisdom* (to use the language of the apostle, 1 Cor. i. 2) have attained to the true knowledge of God, or any thing that deserves to be called rational and useful religion. It is by the gospel only that *life and immortality have been brought to light*, 2 Tim. i. 2.

Perhaps the most satisfactory account of the knowledge of the Greeks, the most intelligent of all the ancients, on the subjects of philosophy and religion, will be found in the works of Cicero, who was well acquainted with their writings, and who has given the substance of them in his own. How little they knew on this subject, confessed by him to be of the greatest importance, may be seen in  
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his treatise on the *Nature of the Gods*, in the introduction to which he writes as follows.

“As many things in philosophy are not sufficiently clear, so the question concerning *the nature of the gods*, which is in itself the most interesting and necessary for the regulation of religion, is attended with peculiar difficulty. And so various and discordant are the opinions of the most learned on the subject, that it affords a good argument for the Academics to withhold their assent to propositions that are uncertain, and to maintain that ignorance is the foundation of philosophy.”

“With respect to this question, the greater part hold what is most probable, viz. that there are gods. But Protagoras doubted of it, and Diagoras of Melos, and Theodorus of Cyrene, held that there are none. And of those who supposed that there are gods, their opinions are so various, that it is difficult to enumerate them. Much has been advanced concerning the form of the gods, the place of their habitation, and their employment; and on these subjects there has been much disputation among the philosophers. But the principal difference among them, and a subject on which every thing depends, is whether the gods undertake to do nothing in the government of the world, or whether every thing was originally constituted, and is still directed, by them, and will be so for ever.

Till

Till this be decided, men must be in much error about things of the greatest importance."

"For there are, and have been, philosophers who have maintained that the gods take no care of human affairs; and if this doctrine be true, what foundation can there be for piety or religion. This will be due to them if they be noticed by them, and if, in return, they render any services to men. But if the gods neither can, nor will, do any thing for us, and give no attention to our conduct, why should we render them any kind of worship, or pray to them? Then will piety be mere hypocrisy, and all religion will be at an end; and this will be attended with the greatest confusion in the business of life. Nay, I do not know but that, with the loss of religion, the foundation of all confidence of men in society, and even of justice, the most important of the virtues, would be taken away."

"But there are other philosophers, and those of the first distinction, who think that the world is governed by the mind and will of the gods, that by them every thing in the course of nature is provided for the use of man; and they express themselves in such a manner, as if they thought the gods themselves were made for the use of men. Against these Carneades has advanced so much, as to excite persons of any curiosity to investigate the truth. For there is no subject about which not  
only

only the unlearned, but even the learned, differ so much; and their opinions are so various, and discordant, that only one of them can be true, tho' they may all be erroneous."

Such was the last and most improved state of the *theory* of religion among the Greeks and Romans, and it certainly exhibits darkness rather than light. Among the latest improvement in the *practice* of heathenism, before it was entirely abolished by the rational principles of christianity, was the *tauribolium*, the *criobolium*, or *ægibolium*, according as the victim was a bull, a ram, or a goat. We find no mention of this extraordinary ceremony before the time of the sons of Constantine, and the most particular description of it is in a poem of Prudentius, who lived in the reign of Theodosius. But I cannot think with Mr. Van Dale, who has thrown much light on the subject, that it bore any relation, direct or indirect, to christianity. Every thing belonging to it was purely heathen; the object being a mystical purification, or renovation, in a sacrifice to the mother of the Gods, and such as was promised in the Eleusinian and other *mysteries*, or *initiations*, and the effect was supposed to continue twenty years, after which it was repeated. Both men and women were thus initiated, or renovated. But it was frequently performed at the expence of cities or provinces, for the safety of the emperor, or  
on



on some other public account ; and then the person on whom it was performed was a priest, or public magistrate ; and it was done in the following manner.

Being habited in a rich and peculiar dress, he took his station in a place covered with boards, but full of chinks and perforations. Over this the bull, or other victim, was sacrificed with the usual preparation and ceremonies ; and as the blood flowed upon these boards, and ran in streams thro' the chinks and perforations, he greedily caught it on his head, face, nose, ears, mouth, and in all the folds of his clothes, covering himself with it as much as he possibly could. He then came out, and was gazed at with the greatest respect and veneration by the spectators ; and if it was on his own account, he wore that dress till he could wear it no longer, as was done with all the clothes in which persons were initiated in other mysteries.

When the ceremony was performed on a public account, it often continued many days, several persons, no doubt, receiving the blood in this manner, and several victims being sacrificed. In Van Dale's tract on this subject are many monumental inscriptions, which shew that this rite was frequently performed for the safety of heathen, and even of some christian, emperors. Voltaire, who could see nothing offensive in the religious rites of the Greeks or

Romans,

Romans, might not have been disgusted with this, and have thought it more decent than the rites of the Mosaic religion. It is evident from many public inscriptions, that during the time of the heathen emperors, it was a rite of religion on which more stress was laid, and from which more real benefit was expected, than from any other whatever. To persons who are really unprejudiced it must therefore appear that, in the most improved state of the world before the prevalence of christianity, the practices of the heathens were no less absurd than their principles; and consequently that there was no reasonable prospect of mankind, without the aid of revelation, growing wiser or better.

4. It is the antecedent improbability of miracles that, I believe, weighs the most with modern unbelievers in their rejection of revelation. But this will be much lessened in the eye of a philosopher, who duly reflects on the infinite magnitude, and the infinite wisdom, of the works of creation (for in these reflections I must suppose the existence of a creator, or an intelligent first cause) which exceed our power of comprehension. In whatever it may be supposed to reside, there must be some where a *mind* that comprehends the whole. For, vast as it is, the whole universe is but *one*, and therefore so must be its author.

Now, in this immense universe we see an atten-

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tion to the greatest and the smallest objects at the same time. There are plants and animals too, which the greatest magnifying powers of our best microscopes can barely, if at all, discover, as well as elephants, crocodiles, and whales: and minute as their structure is, it is equally elaborate, and as perfectly adapted to their situation. It is but little that, after the study of ages, we yet know of this stupendous frame. But can we think it probable that it was never designed to be better understood, and not merely in succession, by beings who only just look at it, and then close their eyes for ever? Every individual man is capable of an endless advance in knowledge, and in virtue too, of which we at present only see enough to convince us that he is capable of it.

If we may be allowed to form our ideas of the supreme intelligence from our own (and we have nothing else to guide us in our speculations on this subject) we may say, Does any person ever execute a work, the knowledge of which he wishes for ever to keep to himself? I do not ascribe vanity to the Supreme Being, because that implies courting the applause of beings not only similar, but equal, or superior to, ourselves; but I think the analogy of all intelligence must carry us so far as to suppose that, whatever was the object of our creator (and he must have had some object) the  
growing

growing knowledge, and consequent improvement, of the rational part of his creation, by means of that knowledge, must be subservient to it, and therefore a part of it.

If such a being as the Supreme be *happy*, and we necessarily ascribe this perfection to him who is possessed of infinite wisdom and infinite power, it must consist in, or be derived from, some thing. In other and plainer terms, he must take pleasure in some thing. We all agree in saying it must be in contemplating the happiness of his creatures, and especially the higher orders of them. Now, would any parent be as well pleased with a succession of children, all of them dying after they had attained the age of three or four years, tho' as happy as their natures would admit of in that infantine state, as in seeing them grow up to manhood, continually improving, and enjoying superior kinds of happiness as long as he himself lived.

Now, in the eye of the Supreme Being, the longest lived of the human race, even the antediluvian patriarchs, are but as infants of a year or a month old. And can it be supposed that the being who produced them, and consequently had what we must call an affection for them, can see them perish in that infantine state? must such men as Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus; such men as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle; such men as Alexander



alexander, Julius Cæsar, and Charles XII, perverted as their great powers were; such men as Voltaire, Rousseau, and Hume, whose powers were more perverted, be lost forever; while, whatever was the state of their minds when they died, their capacity for improvement was not destroyed?

Let me add farther, in pursuance of the same analogy, pleasing, and I hope not deceitful. Does a parent take particular pleasure in rectifying the mistakes of his children, in teaching them what they do not know, bearing with, and correcting, their perverse humours and follies, and advancing them in all respects by degrees; and will there not be *joy in Heaven*, to adopt the language of the New Testament (Luke xv. 7) in opening the eyes of such men as are mentioned above, and especially in making them, after the example of Paul, the instruments of as much good as they have been of evil, to their species? They have already sufficient *power*, and only want a better direction of it, in fact more *knowledge*. In the eye of the universal parent, what are all the errors, and all the vices, of men in this life more than the faults of young children in ours? We do not love them the less, but are more assiduous in our endeavours to correct and improve them, tho' the rod is often necessary for that purpose.

No person who contemplates the universe, or  
any

any part of it, can say that there is any want of *power* in the author of it to effect this purpose, or any other that is in itself proper and desirable. That power can bring all the persons above mentioned, and all the human race, on the stage of existence and action once more. And if the Supreme Being has, in any method that is intelligible to us, signified that he *will* do this, can we doubt the accomplishment of it? The *end* is worthy of the great and benevolent father of all, and he cannot want the *means* of effecting it. And, according to the present state of our knowledge, this end cannot be accomplished in any other way than by the resurrection of mankind at some future period. No philosopher will say that this end can be accomplished on any other plan of which we have any knowledge, now that the doctrine of an immaterial soul, capable of thinking and acting independently of the body, is exploded.

Whether the Divine Being *has* made any declaration of this kind to any of our race, to be by them communicated to the rest, may, no doubt, be ascertained by proper evidence. Any fact that is the object of our senses may be ascertained by human testimony. Nothing, therefore, is wanting to our rational conviction in this case but a credible account of miracles having been wrought for this purpose. For this, as something above the power of

of man, and what can only be performed by the power or permission of God, is the only seal of a divine commission. And if the history of Jesus, as contained in the writings of the Evangelists, be true, this has been done in the fullest and most satisfactory manner possible.

Now let the evidence of the facts recited in the gospel history, and the Acts of the Apostles, be subjected to the most rigorous examination, according to the well known rules for estimating the value of human testimony; and certainly the object is deserving of it. The man who does not feel a deep interest in the inquiry must have a mind exceedingly debased, and deserve to be ranked, as indeed he ranks himself, with the brutes that perish.

5. We see in the history of the Hindoo institution the actual power of religion on the minds of men. For, unquestionably, nothing but the firmest persuasion of the reality of what is *not seen* could make the Hindoos submit to the dreadful austerities which are daily practiced by many of them, both men and women; exposing themselves to certain and torturing deaths, as has been their custom from time immemorial.

6. We see by the Hindoos that accounts of divine interpositions do not necessarily, or naturally, appear incredible to men. According to them,  
their

their god Vichnou has appeared in various forms, to suit himself to the exigencies of the world, and he is still to appear in others. So the people of Lystra took Barnabas to be Jupiter, and Paul to be Mercury, the moment they saw something above human power performed by them, Acts. xiv, 12.

It has been the belief of the great bulk of mankind in all ages, that, beside the visible causes of events, there is an agency of invisible ones in all the affairs of men. Nothing is more evidently owing to the exertion of human power and skill than the favourable issue of battles; and yet the event has so often been the reverse of what was expected from all the known previous circumstances, that in all ages men have depended as much on the aid of some divinity, as on the number and valour of the troops, or the skill of the commander; and the *god of battles* has always been worshipped with peculiar devotion.

That mankind are not naturally or universally incredulous on the subject of religion, is evident even from the conduct of some who have been the most incredulous with respect to the Jewish and Christian revelations; since they have been firm believers in other religions, and those the most absurd. The emperors Marcus Aurelius and Julian, the great boasts of modern unbelievers, for their superior



superior understanding and virtue, were slaves to their own superstition, now universally exploded. Julian sacrificed so many horned cattle, that it was commonly said that if he reigned long the breed would fail; and he gave into the absurd practices of divination and necromancy. The most eminent philosophers of that age, the later Platonists, believed themselves to have supernatural illuminations, and they practiced various rites with a view to procure them.

It is reported, and I doubt not with truth, that some modern unbelievers have been afraid of being in the dark, and that in gaming they have discovered a propensity to faith in that nonentity *fortune*; thinking that success depended on trifling circumstances which could have no more relation to it than the flight of a bird in the Roman auguries. How then can it be said that religion is either *incredible*, or an *unfuitable* instrument with which to work on the minds of men? and why may it not be employed by the Divine Being, who, as he made men, must know what they are, to answer his great and benevolent purposes with respect to them.

Philosophy, it will be said, shews the folly of believing in the interposition of any invisible powers with respect to the event of a battle, and the affairs of men in general; since they evidently depend on the previous circumstances, tho' they are  
not

not always known at the time, and that our ignorance of this sufficiently accounts for the event not always corresponding to the previous expectation of the most sagacious of men. But then a higher philosophy, and no less true, teaches us that all these previous circumstances were foreseen, and intended, by that mind which planned, and which superintends, the whole system of nature; and therefore that there is a *providence*, particular as well as general, respecting all the affairs of men, and consequently a real foundation for religion.

An attention to the analogies in nature will teach us that a Being who thought proper, for whatever reasons, to make the world, and to place such creatures as men in it, must have sufficient reason for giving constant attention to them; and if on their part an attention to him, and to his providence, be of any use to men, with respect to his final object, he would take the most proper method to engage that attention. Now this attention is evidently more effectually gained by occasional, than by constant and uniform, appearances. How few persons give any attention to the regular rising and setting of the sun, the periodical returns of summer and winter, and other constant appearances, so as to make any inquiry into the causes of them; when they are struck in the most forcible manner by storms, earthquakes, and other uncommon and ir-

regular appearances. And yet the great author of nature is as much concerned in the one as in the other. They must, therefore, know little of human nature who think that divine interpositions are an improper means of conveying instruction to man. And yet these are the persons who call themselves exclusively *philosophers*.

To a truly philosophical, or reflecting mind it will, no doubt, appear, that we are equally dependant upon God for what is imparted originally, and provided for in the usual course of nature, as for what is imparted occasionally ; but mankind in general, we see, in fact, are not so apt to be *impressed* by it, and therefore an habitual sense of our dependance upon God (which is of the greatest use to the moral improvement of man) is better gained by that system which is best calculated to remind man of that dependance, then by one that is less adapted to gain that end. A wise parent, who wishes to have his child sensible of his dependance upon him, and his obligation to him, will not give him his whole fortune at once, and thereby make him independant of himself, and his future bounty. And does not the same reason, in the nature of things and of man, apply to the case of our universal parent ? On this account, therefore, as well as others, revealed religion is a better system, more adapted to human nature, than that which is termed

ed *natural*, could the principles of it be ever so easily and clearly ascertained, which they by no means are.

Insurmountable difficulties occur to us in the consideration tho' not of the *being* of God, yet in that of his moral attributes, and the maxims of his moral government, from the mere light of nature; and no light at all could we, from this source of knowledge, get into a future state of existence. Consequently, if the proper *rule of life* could be discovered, a sufficient *motive* to the practice of it would be wanting. Now revelation supplies both these defects, and leaves us at no loss whatever, either with respect to what we must do to secure the favour of our Maker here, or our happiness hereafter.

## REMARKS



THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

BY

JOHN BURNET

OF LINCOLN'S INN

ESQ.

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JOHN BURNET

OF LINCOLN'S INN

ESQ.

# R E M A R K S

ON

MR. DUPUIS'S ORIGIN

OF ALL

R E L I G I O N S.

—————*Sobrius ergo*  
*Dic aliquid dignum promissis. Incipit. Nil est.*  
HORACE.

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## THE INTRODUCTION.

THIS work of Mr. Dupuis's is certainly the most extraordinary production of the present, or of any preceding age, and the *in plus ultra* of infidelity. For after giving his opinion that the five books of Moses are a mere *Arabian tale*, by which he must mean a fictitious story, that the whole of the evangelical history is another fiction, that no such persons as Jacob and his twelve sons, or Christ and his twelve apostles, ever existed; but were intended to denote the sun, and the twelve signs of the Zodiâc, nothing more contrary to the opinion of all mankind hitherto can be asserted.

Yet

Yet with this extreme of dogmatism Mr. Dupuis pretends to advance no opinion of his own. "I analyze," he says, (*Preface*, p. 7,) "the opinions of others, but am careful not to give any of my own. I am only the historian of the opinions of other persons." But where can we find the strange opinions that I have recited? That there never was such a person as Jesus Christ has, indeed, been advanced by Mr. Volney; but he does not quote Mr. Volney for it; and it is commonly said that Mr. Volney had this opinion from Mr. Dupuis, and not Mr. Dupuis from him. Does Mr. Dupuis give no opinion of his own when he says, *ib.* p. 8, "I shall not speak of *revealed religion*, because there neither is, nor can be, any such thing?" Others, no doubt, have said the same; but does Mr. Dupuis give no opinion of his own, when he avowedly adopts that of other persons.

Mr. Dupuis is as little satisfied with the enemies, as with the friends, of revealed religion; thinking that they have not gone on sufficiently good ground in their attacks upon it. "The philosophers of our days," he says, vol. 3, p. 7, "are less credulous than the common people, but they are not better informed;" meaning that they had not a sufficient stock of learning, and of acquaintance with antiquity, to refute it on solid principles. He has, therefore, taken quite new ground, and, no doubt,

doubt, thinks that he has by this means done what they were not able to do. And a work that bears more marks of deep erudition, more ingenuity, or more labour, tho' accompanied with little judgment, has hardly ever appeared. But I am inclined to think with Festus concerning Paul, Acts xxvi. 24, that *much learning has made him mad*, and deprived him of the use of his reasoning powers. This must either be his case, or that of all the world besides, and whether he be right or wrong, he will be outvoted.\* We must either adopt this hypothesis, or say that his work is a mere *jeu d'esprit*, that he was not in earnest in writing it, but wished to make an experiment, how far confident assertion, and an appearance of deep learning, accompanied with ingenuity, could go in imposing on the world. But this work is too large, and too dull, to be a *jeu d'esprit*. The other hypothesis, therefore, which is the only alternative in the case, is the more probable of the two. For if he be in earnest, his mind must have suffered a considerable degree of derangement.

\* When Lee the tragedian was in a mad house, and was asked by a stranger how he came there, he said he was outvoted. Being desired to explain himself, he replied, "I said the world was mad, and the world said I was mad, and they outvoted me."

## SECTION I.



## SECTION I.

*Of the Argument concerning the Being of a God.*

**T**HAT Mr. Dupuis is an unbeliever in the being of a God, is equally evident with his being an unbeliever in revelation, tho' he asserts the contrary. "Does there exist," he says (*Preface*, p. 7) "a God, a supreme cause, living, intelligent, omnipotent, eternal and incomprehensible by man. This I do not examine, because it appears to me to be clear, and because it does not enter into the plan of my work." But he says, *ib.* p. 10, "There is nothing but *the universe itself* that can correspond to the immense idea which the name of *God* presents to us."

To shew the absurdity of the common opinion concerning the being of "a God, eternal, and invisible, the cause of all things." Mr. Dupuis says *vol.* 1, p. 2. "It was natural for man, in tracing the *causes* of things, to stop where *effects* seem to cease, and where the being takes a character different from those that are subordinate to it; and this is *nature*. It was natural to go to the *tree*, in inquiring into the cause of the *fruit*, and to the *earth* as the cause of the *tree*, both of them being produced

ced and re-produced, and evidently *effects*. But the series of production and re-production seems to stop at the *earth*, which has no character like that which is produced and transitory. There also terminate the researches of men with respect to the progression of causes. For we must stop somewhere. An infinite progression of causes is an absurdity, and since we must stop somewhere, why go beyond the boundary where we see it to terminate."

Of all the methods of stating the argument against the being of a God, this is, surely, the most palpably defective. If any thing in argumentation be more evident than another, it is that the cause must be equal to the effect. *Must not he that formed the eye see, Ps. xciv. 9, and he that gave understanding to man himself understand.* An effect in which there are evident marks of *design*, must have a designing, or intelligent, cause; and are there not marks of design in the tree, as well as in its fruit? The structure of the most insignificant plant exceeds the comprehension of any man; and yet we are to look no farther for the cause of this exquisite production than the *earth*, in which it grows, and which discovers no mark of intelligence at all, nay is more remote from it than the plant itself. If we take in the whole of the earth, with all its lands, seas, rivers, and mountains, we perceive no

more appearance of an intelligent principle residing in it than in a single stone; and if we, farther, take in the whole solar system, the sun, moon, and stars, we make no nearer approach to the idea of intelligence. These are even more evidently *effects*, and their arrangement, and the laws to which they are subject, evidently suppose a superior and designing cause. And if this cause be not visible, it must be something that is invisible to us. It is not more evident that the fruit implies a tree, which Mr. Dupuis allows, than that the whole system implies this cause. And since nothing that is *finite* is equal to the effect, it must be a Being that is *infinite*, and likewise eternal. For every person must allow, that if ever there had been a time in which nothing existed, nothing could ever have existed. Difficult, therefore, as it is, to conceive the existence of such a being, we are left in an infinitely greater difficulty without the supposition.

It would follow from Mr. Dupuis's mode of reasoning, that provided any person had no opportunity of looking into a watch, or of seeing the person who wound it up, it would be reasonable for him to conclude that it was a self-existent and a self-moving machine. For what is the whole visible system of the universe but a machine, the structure, and the maker, of which we do not see? Does a  
telescope

*telescope* require a maker, and the *eye* require none ? Or could the earth, together with the sun, moon and stars make either an eye, or a telescope.

Provided, however, that what is visible in the universe in general, or the earth only, nay a single stone in it, *can* be conceived to be possessed of intelligence, and the other attributes of divinity, the effect upon the mind would be the same as if they were ascribed to any thing that is invisible ; because they are the *attributes* of divinity by which the mind is impressed, and not any *substance* in which they are supposed to inhere. If I really believe that any being whatever was the author of my existence, that he supports me in life, gives constant attention to me, prescribes to me a rule of conduct, and will reward or punish me for my observance or neglect of it, this faith will have the same practical effect, whether it be any thing visible or invisible that is possessed of these powers. But it appears to me that there is an insuperable difficulty in conceiving that these powers *can* be possessed by any thing that is the object of our senses ; and therefore to pretend, with Mr. Dupuis, that there is no other being to whom we have to look than the earth is in effect to adopt the principles of absolute atheism.

The belief of a God, as the maker and governor of the world greatly facilitates the belief of revelation.

For



For if the laws of nature be conceived to be nothing but the appointment of God, or, in fact, the mode in which he himself constantly operates, from a general preference of that particular mode of action, as best calculated to answer the purposes that he has in view, it is not difficult to conceive that his choice of a mode of action may change with circumstances, and that, tho' in general he chuses to act in an uniform manner, he may see sufficient reason occasionally to depart from it; because this is what we frequently observe in those men whose general conduct is the most uniform; and it is natural to judge concerning one intelligent agent by another, tho' the difference in rank be ever so great.

Mr. Dupuis evidently considers all accounts of supernatural interposition as absolutely incredible. But the readiness with which such interpositions have been believed by all mankind, in all ages, amounts almost to a proof that there have been such interpositions. A philosopher should inquire whence this *credulity*, or proneness to believe in this case, could have arisen. Like every other effect, it must have been generated by some adequate *cause*, as also is the prevailing incredulity in modern times. As this arises, in a certain state of mind, from men's having no *experience* of any such thing, and, from their want of faith in the testimony

mony of others, the reverse of this must have arisen from such experience either in themselves, or in those persons whose veracity they saw no reasonable cause to doubt.

It is usual, tho' it is very unphilosophical, to say that *the vulgar* may easily be made to believe any thing. But it should be considered *what things* they are easily made to believe. They are only things analogous to their present belief. In other respects, the vulgar are the least credulous, and the most attached to the principles they hold. For this reason all ancient opinions and practices remain the longest with the common people in all countries, and innovations always begin with persons of a philosophical or speculative turn, the free and bold thinkers of the age; and these are never numerous. They are those who readily see remote analogies of things, by means of which new and unexpected truths are discovered. Such persons are often too apt to pride themselves in departing from the sentiments and practices of the vulgar, whom they sometimes treat with undeserved contempt.

We must not forget that the minds of all men, the vulgar or the speculative, are mechanical things; and that neither particular opinions, nor a disposition to form or retain them, are produced without a cause, which it is the business of philosophy to investigate; and nothing is more unphilosophical than

than indiscriminate exclamations against whole bodies of men, the *vulgar, barbarians, Negroes, Jews, &c. &c.* as universally stupid, and men whose opinions it is not worth our while to inquire about, or to account for.

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## SECTION II.

### *Of the Age of the World.*

**N**OTWITHSTANDING Mr. Dupuis's declaration, that he had no opinion of his own to advance, no man living has advanced more extraordinary ones, and such as, I believe, are peculiar to himself. One of them is concerning the great antiquity of astronomical observations, and consequently of civilization, and the origin of mankind. "The epocha of the invention of the Zodiac," he says, vol. 3, p. 365, "goes farther back than the time fixed by our chronologers for the creation of the world, which I am far from believing. For it appears to me to have been eternal." According to Mr. Dupuis, vol. 3, p. 367, "the origin of astronomy was fourteen or fifteen thousand years before the christian æra. Of this," he says, p. 365, "the argument from the Zodiac is a kind of demonstration,

monstration, unless we suppose that the signs had their names given them at random, without any design."

His object in this argument was, no doubt, to invalidate the history of Moses, according to which the origin of civilization, and of mankind, could not have been much more than four or five thousand years before our æra, which is more than ten thousand years short of the date that Mr. Dupuis assigns to it. But whatever mistake Moses may have fallen into with respect to this subject, or any events a thousand years before his own time, he may have been a competent witness of what passed under his own eye; so that it was hardly worth Mr. Dupuis's while to take so much pains with the subject. Since, however, his argument is curious, I shall give a little attention to it.

It is founded on the idea which has been pretty generally entertained, tho' without any direct proof, that the names of the twelve signs of the Zodiac relate to the seasons of the year, and the labours of agriculture. But it was farther necessary to Mr. Dupuis's purpose, that the observations should have been made, and the names given, *in Egypt*. He therefore says, vol. 3, p. 324, that "the general supposition concerning the origin of these names could not be demonstrated for want of going back, by means of the precession of the equinoxes, to an epocha



epocha sufficiently distant." But going back to the time when the equinox was in *Libra*, six signs distant from Aries, which is commonly supposed to be the earliest time that is known to history or even to fable, "this new position of the sphere," he says, vol. 3, p. 329, "puts every thing into its place and becomes a strict calendar of the climate of Egypt, exclusive of every other country" and "to Egypt," he says, p. 325, "we must look for the origin of the constellations."

Tho' the opinion of the names of the signs having a relation to the seasons of the year be merely conjectural, for we have no historical account of it, it is not destitute of probability. *Libra*, or a pair of scales, may very well denote the equal balance of day and night, supposing neither of the scales to preponderate. Also since *capricorn*, or the *wildgoat*, naturally gets into the most elevated situations, browsing on what he can find on the highest mountains, it was thought to suit the place in the heavens from which the sun begins to ascend from the southern to the northern tropic. And the *crab* being an animal that goes backwards, it was thought to suit that tropic from which the sun begins to descend, and return to his former place. And the sheep being turned into the fresh pastures in the spring, was thought to be well expressed by the sign *Aries*, which the sun enters at that time of the year.

year. Thus the state of the heavens was thought to give a propriety to the names that have been fixed to the signs belonging to the *equinoxes*, and the two *solstices*; and as the constellation *Virgo* has an ear of corn in her hand, it was thought to suit the autumn, which is generally the time of harvest, when the sun enters that sign.

But this by no means satisfies Mr. Dupuis, because it does not suit the climate of Egypt. "The goat," he says, (vol. 3, p. 326, 330) "always ascends to the highest place, and therefore more naturally denotes the summer than the winter solstice. The labour of the plow in Egypt is in November, and their harvest is in March; and it is only towards the end of August that the sun enters *Virgo*," vol. 3, p. 328. He farther, with much ingenuity, observes, that "Aquarius naturally denotes the inundation of Egypt, by the overflowing of the Nile, which is after the summer solstice," vol. 3, p. 330. "Also, anciently the sign of Capricorn had a fish annexed to it, to shew that after the summer solstice the Nile begins to overflow, p. 331. After the inundation, the ground being too soft for the plow, the sheep are turned into the fresh pastures, denoted by the sign of the *ram*, which the sun at that time enters, p. 334. The plowing commences after this, when the sun enters *Taurus*, the bull being used for that purpose. The

rapid production of vegetables immediately afterwards," he says "was denoted by *the Twins*, or according to the old spheres, two young goats, *ib.* The crab naturally marked the retrocession of the sun after the winter solstice, *ib.* and a month after this solstice the sun's acquiring great power was signified by the *Lion*, vol. 3, p. 336. And the harvest beginning in March was then denoted by *the virgin*, with her ear of corn," p. 337.

There is certainly much ingenuity in these observations, but they amount to nothing more than a *probability* in favour of Mr. Dupuis's argument, and his superstructure is too great to rest with safety on so slight a foundation. And, numerous as his circumstances of probability are, they are much more than balanced by another circumstance of extreme improbability, and one to which it does not appear that Mr. Dupuis has given the least attention, which is, that mankind should have advanced what he considers as a great step in science, viz. the observation of the sun's course in the heavens, the division of the Zodiac into twelve signs, and the giving names to them, and the other constellations, on scientific principles, and yet have made no farther advances in more than ten thousand years after this.

The first steps in science are generally the most difficult, and one great discovery naturally prepares the

the way for others ; whereas, according to Mr. Dupuis, after arranging the Zodiac, neither philosophers, nor indeed mankind, at large, left the least trace of their existence in the immense tract of time abovementioned, either in sacred or profane history. For, independently of the writings of Moses, all the histories that have come down to us, or of which we have any account, shew that mankind, at least that civilization, (and Mr. Dupuis's hypothesis supposes a very advanced state of it) cannot be older than he represents it to have been.

The Chaldeans, according to all accounts, vied with the Egyptians with respect to the antiquity of their astronomical observations, and Mr. Dupuis himself says, vol. 3, p. 341, that "their observations reached no farther than two thousand years before the christian æra." At the earliest period of true or probable history, the world was very thinly inhabited, except some parts of Asia and Egypt. All beyond was rude and barbarous, men living in state but little above that of brutes. This was clearly the case with Greece, which is not very distant from Asia, and where the climate is remarkably fine, and every thing favourable to improvements. In a few centuries, however, the Greeks advanced from this rude state to the greatest civilization. This is natural, and sufficiently agreeable to more recent facts, such as are furnished by the histories of Mexico



ico and Peru. But that no advances whatever, of which any trace can be discovered, should be made not only in the arts of life, but even in the multiplication of the species, for the space of ten thousand years, is altogether incredible, whatever the Zodiac may say to the contrary. Compared to this, the legend of the *seven sleepers* was a poor fiction. They were but seven persons, and a dog, and only slept about three hundred years; but here all mankind, men, women and children, and all the dogs and cattle too, must have slept without interruption more than ten thousand years.

According to Mr. Dupuis, the oldest system of religious worship was adopted when the equinox was in *Taurus*, whence arose the worship of the sun, under the form of *a bull*, or *calf*; and when, in the course of the precession of the equinoxes, it was in *Aries*, the symbol of the ram, or the lamb, was introduced. But had mankind no worship at all in the long interval of many thousand years that elapsed from the time that the equinox was in *Libra*, to its arrival in *Taurus*? Why do we not find some trace of *the scales*, as an emblem of the deity? All the signs, surely, from *Libra* to *Taurus*, must have had their turns in this symbolical worship of the sun; since the same causes must, we should imagine, have produced the same effects.

There is another objection to Mr. Dupuis's hypothesis

pothesis mentioned by himself, vol. 3, p. 340, which is, that the signs of the Zodiac may denote the places opposite to those which the sun occupied at the time, as being most open to observation, those constellations rising at sun set. To this, however, he gives no answer. He only says, "that admitting this, the origin of the Zodiac will still be in Egypt." But it entirely overturns his opinion of the very great age of the world.

On the whole, it seems natural to suppose that since, according to Mr. Dupuis, the correspondence of the signs of the Zodiac with the seasons of the year, and the state of agriculture, as observed by those who first noticed it, is not sufficiently exact, there is but little foundation for the hypothesis; that the names were given to the signs on some other idea, which we cannot now trace; and that their imperfect correspondence to the seasons and was only accidental. Besides, it will by many be thought that the origin of the Zodiac was in India, and not in Egypt. On so very precarious a foundation does this great argument for the extraordinary antiquity of the world rest. Mr. Dupuis himself wavered in his opinion concerning its validity. For tho' he had called it *a kind of demonstration*, he says, vol. 3, p. 347, "I do not lay much stress on my speculations concerning the Zodiac. They are only conjectures; but those on mythology

mythology have truth for their basis." These, therefore, I shall now proceed to examine.

Mr. Volney, however, has more confidence in this argument than Mr. Dupuis the author of it. For he says, (*Ruins*, p. 221.) "The present system may be referred with certainty, on the authority of the monuments of astronomy itself, to near seventeen thousand years." So much strength does good will in any cause lend to a weak argument.

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### S E C T I O N III.

#### *Of the History, and the Institutions of Moses.*

**T**HAT part of the scripture history which all unbelievers think they can assail with the most advantage, and in declaiming against which they indulge themselves with the least reserve, is that which is given by Moses. But their opinions on the subject of this history are very various, and discordant.

Mr. Gibbon calls it a *tradition*, Mr. Langles says the five books of Moses are copied, at second hand, from the five Bedas of the Hindoos. Mr. Dupuis says, vol. 1, p. 3, they are for the most part a collection of *tales* like those of the Arabs.

"The

"The history of the three companions, of Daniel," he says, p. 280, "is an Assyrian tale." He also says (*Explication of the Plates*, p. 12) that the cosmogony of the Hebrews was derived from that of the ancient Persians. "From the Chaldeans," he says, vol. 3, p. 202, "we have the fable of the deluge of Xithuthrus, of which that of Noah of the Hebrews, and that of Deucalion of the Greeks, are copies." The author of the Genesis of the Persians, he says, vol. 3, p. 12, places his paradise in Iran, which the Hebrews have corrupted into Eden. He seems also to have thought that the Mosaic History was borrowed in part from Sanchoniathon. For he says, p. 6, that "he was the oldest writer in Phenicia," in which Palestine is generally included. And he frequently calls the Mosaic history a legend.

But what is peculiar to Mr. Dupuis, is that the principal part of this history is a *concealed allegory*, being a description of appearances in the heavens, resembling the mythology and theology of the Egyptians. "From the twelve great gods of Egypt," he says, vol. 1, p. 66, "the Jews have taken the idea of their twelve patriarchs, the children of the same father, and christians that of their twelve apostles, the companions of God, the father of light; whose death and resurrection they celebrate like that of Adonis in Phenicia, and that of Osiris in Egypt."



gypt. The breast plate of the High Priest formed of twelve precious stones, arranged three and three, and grouped like the seasons; their twelve loaves of shew bread, arranged six and six, as the signs of each hemisphere, have no other object than the heavens, and the Zodiac," p. 57. He does not say to which of the twelve signs each of the twelve sons of Jacob corresponds, but he says, vol. 2, p. 117, Dan, the sign of the scorpion, belongs to the eighth month from Nisan, on which Jeroboam ordered the worship of the calves at Dan;" and he seems to refer Judah to the constellation of the Lion. The twelve oxen which supported the brazen sea in the temple of Solomon, were consecrated, he says, p. 61. to the great goddess of the Syrians, Astarte. But where is Mr. Dupuis's authority for this consecration? He might with as much truth have said that the temple was consecrated to Baal, and that his image was erected in it.

"In imitation of the Egyptians," Mr. Dupuis says (*Treatise on mysteries*, p. 7) "Moses consecrated the tribe of Levi to the sacred office. He fixed the month of Nisan, which answers to the equinoctial sign of the spring for the commencement of the Jewish year, in memory of the renewal of nature, after being laid waste by a pretended deluge, which was only a fiction of cosmogony, p. 157. To mention no more of these resemblances, as copies of heathen

then worship, he says, p. 90, " Samson, or god the sun, which the honey of Mythra brought to his memory, was the Philistine Hercules." This, however, is later than the history of Moses.

Such are the strange opinions that have been advanced by unbelievers with respect to the history and institutions of Moses, on which I would remark in the first place, that they are very inconsistent with each other, and by no means correspond to the facts they propose to explain. A *tradition* is a story transmitted from one generation to another before it was reduced to writing. For *histories* written by cotemporaries are never called *traditions*. However, traditions in general are believed to be true both by the relater, and those to whom the narrative is proposed. But tho' the book of Genesis may be said to be a traditional account, the history of the deliverance of the Israelites from their bondage in Egypt, and of their travels in the wilderness, is no tradition. It was always believed by the nation of Israelites that it was written by Moses at the time; and the numerous particulars of persons, times, and places, are clearer vouchers of its having been so written, than any other history that has reached us. Such tables of genealogy as we find in Genesis, ch. v, x, xi, xxxvi, xlvi, and in Exodus, ch. vi, such accounts of the numbering of the people in each tribe as we have in Num.

ch. i, ii, xxvi, and so particular an account of the marches and stations in their travels as we have Num. xxxiii, are never found in Romances. There is nothing resembling these things in the Arabian Tales. On the contrary, they are such things as might be expected in histories composed with the greatest regard to truth and exactness. In this respect the narrative of Moses exceeds Xenophon's of the retreat of the ten thousand, or any part of the history of Thucydides.

A *legend* is a story generally traditional, perhaps not believed by the author, but always calculated to gain the assent of those for whose use it is written. But this was by no means the case with the writings, or the institutions, of Moses. He relates the history of his own times; and the sole object of his writings was to enforce the observance of institutions to which his nation was extremely averse, and even continued to be so for several centuries afterwards. They never, however, entertained a doubt with respect to the truth of the narrative; and notwithstanding such a dispersion and sufferings as no other people ever experienced, all the Jews are to this very day firm believers in the writings of Moses. And yet they contain particulars concerning their ancestors which could not but be very offensive to them.

*Oriental tales* are works of mere imagination, not  
believed

believed to be true either by the narrator, or those who are the greatest admirers of them ; which is far from being the case with respect to the writings of Moses. Nations do not take their codes of law, and especially institutions to which they are averse, from fictitious tales. The Mahometans do not do so, tho' their religion is such as they soon had a great attachment to ; and yet with much more probability might the Koran be said to be an Arabian tale, or a legend, than the Pentateuch ; and that the histories alluded to in it, as the battle of Bedr, &c. were the invention of the writer. The Pentateuch contains the civil law of the Hebrew nation, as the Koran does that of the Mahometans, and their authority is never questioned.

That the books of Moses are copied from any writings of an earlier age is a mere arbitrary assertion, and altogether improbable. Where are those earlier writings to be found ? Let them be produced, and compared. The *Bedas* we may hope to see soon. At present we are pretty well informed concerning their general contents, and the religion they enforce ; and no two systems can be more unlike than those of the Hebrews and the Hindoos. As to Sanchoniathon, the most learned critics are of opinion that there never was such a person, and that the book ascribed to him was the invention of Porphyry, to oppose to the Mosaic account of the creation,



ation, and his early history of mankind. His, however, is only the same account disguised, so that if it be no forgery, it is in a great measure a confirmation of the history of Moses. All that we know concerning this Sanchoniathon is thro' a quotation of a work of Porphyry in Eusebius. We know nothing of any records of the Chaldeans, as those concerning the deluge, alluded to by Mr. Dupuis, but in some fragments of the writings of Berofus, who was cotemporary with Alexander the Great; or of those of the Egyptians, but from the writings of Manetho, who lived in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus. Whereas the writings of Moses are extant, and open to the most critical examination. What do we know even of the titles, or subjects, of any books written by Egyptians, Chaldeans or Phenicians. The probability is, that there never were any such approaching to the time of Moses.

But of all the opinions abovementioned, the most ingenious, but the most absurd, is that of Mr. Dupuis, viz. that the writings of Moses are an *astrological allegory*, and that the twelve sons of Jacob denote the twelve signs of the Zodiac. I only wonder that he should allow such profound knowledge, and such ingenuity, to a people of whom he, with all other unbelievers, always speaks with the greatest contempt, as a *horde* (to use their favourite expression) of barbarous and ignorant slaves. And this

this profound knowledge was not confined to Moses, who was educated at the court of Pharaoh. For according to Mr. Dupuis, it appears in every part of their subsequent history. Samson, he says, was no real person, any more than the sons of Jacob, but the Phenician Hercules, who was the sun. Jesus, too, was the same deity, and the twelve apostles the same signs of the Zodiac with the twelve patriarchs. The Apocalypse must, according to Mr. Dupuis, be a work of by far the most profound erudition in all antiquity. And yet all those writings were the works of Jews.

It is, however, not a little extraordinary, that these allegorical writings should never have been understood in their true sense by the people among whom they were published, and by whom they were ever held in as high esteem as were any other books by any other nation. Were the authors of these writings the only men of learning in the nation, and were all the rest so disposed to admire what they did not understand?

It is also extraordinary that, tho', according to Mr. Dupuis, the religion of the Hebrews was originally the same with that of all the neighbouring nations, they should yet be so radically different. All other ancient nations, whether they acknowledged one supreme deity or not, worshipped a multiplicity of gods; whereas the Hebrews strictly  
confined

confined their worship to one. All other nations had human sacrifices, which the Hebrews held in the greatest abhorrence. All others had recourse to various modes of divination, and the arts of Magic, and Necromancy; whereas in the writings of Moses every thing of this kind, the offspring of the most miserable superstition, is treated with the greatest contempt. Could principles fundamentally the same lead to sentiments and practices so very different, nay the very reverse of one another? Can the same tree produce the sweet orange and the sour crab?

There is no circumstance of which Mr. Dupuis avails himself so much, or repeats so often, both with respect to the Jewish and the Christian religions, as the history of *the fall of man* in the beginning of the book of Genesis. I believe with him, and have maintained in my writings, that this history is either an allegory, or founded on uncertain tradition, that it is an hypothesis to account for the origin of evil, adopted by Moses, which by no means accounts for the facts. But how does this affect Moses's history of his own times, a history that appears from evidence internal and external, to have been written while the events were recent, and to which the whole nation bore testimony; and more unprejudiced witnesses there could not have been in any case, from the reluctance  
with

with which they received, and retained, the institutions which that history was calculated to enforce.

Let Mr. Dupuis consider how his argument will apply to any similar case. Supposing, as he does, that the history of the Argonautic expedition is a fable or allegory, and that there never were such persons as Jason, Hercules, or Chiron; would it follow that the history of Greece in the later periods was equally fabulous, and that there never was a Pisistratus, a Solon, or a Miltiades? Supposing that not only the history of Romulus and Remus being suckled by a wolf was a fiction, but that there never were any men who bore those names, or did what is ascribed to them, would it follow that there were no kings in Rome prior to the Consuls, or that there never were such men as Fabricius, Cincinnatus, or Scipio Africanus, who lived before the time of the historians who have recorded their actions?

Admitting, then, the history of Adam, and of the ante-deluvians, to be ever so fabulous, it will not follow that the history of Noah is fabulous too; and much less that of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses's, our ancestors, and at no great distance from his own time, and which was of such a nature as not to be easily forgotten.

Mr. Dupuis did not, surely, consider how near  
Moses



Moses was to one of those persons whom he supposes to denote the signs of the Zodiac. For *Levi*, one of them, was only his great grandfather. His grandfather *Kohath* accompanied his father *Levi* when *Jacob* went to Egypt. Now, for a man to pretend that his own great grandfather, was not a man, but a constellation of stars, would be deemed little less than insanity. After so short an interval, *Moses* must certainly have known whether *Levi*, his great grandfather, was a man like himself, or not. And since he relates the history of his birth, as well as that of all the twelve brothers, and mentions the reasons of the names which their several mothers gave them, in a manner perfectly natural, and agreeing with the manners of that age, there cannot be a reasonable doubt of its being a real history; that *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, were men, and not stars, as well as their descendants *Levi*, *Kohath*, *Amram*, and *Moses*, who descended in a right line from them.

It is something singular too, that, in this same allegorical history, we should be made to pass from men to stars, and from stars to men again. For tho' according to *Mr. Dupuis*, the twelve patriarchs were the twelve signs of the Zodiac, he finds no place in the heavens for their immediate ancestors, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*; and tho' *Moses* and *Aaron* were real men, *Samson*, who came long after them

them, was the Phenician Hercules, or the sun. And tho' he does not pretend that David, Solomon, or the other kings of Judah or Israel, were not real human beings, he makes the history of the companions of Daniel to be an Assyrian tale. If Shadrack, Meshech, and Abednego, were fabulous personages, Daniel himself could not well have been any other; especially as, proceeding farther, we have more fabulous and allegorical circumstances; Jesus being the sun, the same with Osiris, Adonis, and Samson, and the twelve apostles the twelve signs of the Zodiac, the same with the twelve patriarchs. Now, tho' the transition from fable to history be natural, to go back from history to fable, especially in a more enlightened age, abounding with writers, is certainly very unnatural.

Mr. Dupuis supposes the institutions of Moses to have been his own devise, and the Pentateuch to have been written by himself. At least I do not recollect that he says any thing to the contrary. Now these books contain both a code of civil law, and a history of the public transactions of his own times; as of the plagues inflicted on the Egyptians, the institution of the passover in commemoration of their own deliverance from a state of cruel bondage, their passage thro' the red sea, their hearing the delivery of the ten commandments from mount Sinai, &c. &c. of which, if they really happened,

all the people must have been witnesses. Now, can it be supposed that any people would have received a body of laws, and a religion to which they were exceedingly averse, when they knew there was no truth in the account of the transactions, said to be of their own times, calculated to enforce the observance of them.

At whatever period of time it be supposed that the books of Moses, containing the religious institutions and the civil laws of the Hebrews, were forged, a peculiar difficulty will attend it. If it was near the time of Moses, it would be in the perfect recollection of living witnesses that they were not written by him, or by his direction, and that the events related in them never happened. And if it was at any distant time, the people must have had some other laws, and a different religion, which they would not have been disposed to change for institutions they had never heard of before, and such as they disliked. Nor could it have been possible to persuade any nation that a history of themselves (with which, if it was a forgery, they must have been unacquainted) framed to impose upon them a new religion, and new laws was the work of any respected ancestor or citizen. For if the writings were genuine, they could not but have heard of them before.

A respect for a religion which a nation had only neglected

neglected thro' dislike, and a prepossession in favour of another, might be revived by a series of new events, natural or supernatural ; or new laws might be adopted *as new ones*, if they saw sufficient reason for adopting them ; but the adoption of a totally new religion, and new laws, *as ancient ones*, practised by their ancestors, could never have taken place with any people.

After a time of great degeneracy, as that of Manasseh, persons about the court might be unacquainted with the writings of Moses ; and the perusal of the threatnings against their apostacy contained in them might give great alarm ; but this circumstance could not have produced the effect ascribed to it, or would have been very transient, if no such books had been heard of before ; or if when they were produced, and examined, it could have been made to appear that the contents were different from what they had received before. There would, no doubt, have been persons enough able and willing to undeceive a court sufficiently willing to be undeceived in such a case as this. As to the mere ignorance of the contents of the books of Moses, how many sincere Christians are there, in Catholic and even Protestant countries, who have never read their bibles thro'. It was for the greatest part of his life, by his own confession, the case of Dr. S. Johnson, tho' he was even a bigot in religion.

Besides,



Besides, was not the temple of Solomon then standing, tho' it had been applied to other purposes, and was not the structure of it, and the apparatus of instruments, &c. belonging to it, a standing proof of the antiquity of the religion that had been exercised in it? Were not the orders of priests and Levites then subsisting? If they had not been heard of before, would they have been adopted at that time, as ancient institutions?

Some will pretend that the books of Moses might have been forged immediately after the Babylonish captivity. But this was a period of history peculiarly unfavourable for such a purpose. The people had then resided a long time in a distant country, and had married into foreign families, forbidden by the laws of Moses. That they were in a great measure become weaned from their own country, appeared by the small number of those who returned to it, when they were at liberty so to do. Could it then have been in the power of Ezra, Nehemiah, or any other person (supposing they could have had any reasonable motive for making the proposal) to have compelled them to dismiss their wives, and conform to various disagreeable laws, without being able to produce sufficient evidence of their being obligatory, as those of their ancestors?

Did not the decree of Cyrus, of which there is a copy in the book of Ezra, authorize the Jews to  
return

return, and rebuild their temple, and resume their former worship, which implied the existence of a former temple, and a mode of worship peculiar to the nation? And this was many years before the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, who went to Judea only in the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus. They found the Jews in the exercise of their religion, but in some disorder, which, with considerable difficulty, they rectified.

It is said by the Jews, and is probable in itself, that Ezra collected, and arranged, as many of the books of their scriptures as were written before his time, tho' nothing is said of this in the book that bears his name, or that of Nehemiah. But there must have been other persons in the country acquainted with ancient writings as well as he, and who would have prevented any disagreeable imposition. Besides, it is evident from his narrative, which has more internal marks of genuineness than most other writings, that when he arrived the books of Moses were well known, and that he only read them to the people at the feast of tabernacles, agreeably to the injunction in the law for that purpose.

At this time also there was a schism in the Jewish church; many of the Jews, and among them the grandson of the Highpriest, and many others, from a dislike of the rigour of Ezra and Nehemiah,  
joining

joining the Samaritans. This people had seperated from the Jews, having taken offence at their not being allowed to join them in rebuilding the temple, and to be admitted to the worship of it, on account of their being a mixed people, and not all of Hebrew extraction. And the Jews and Samaritans were ever after at variance, and had the greatest antipathy to each other.

Notwithstanding this, the Samaritans had copies of the books of Moses, which they certainly would not at that time have received from the Jews. But, respecting those books as much as the Jews themselves, they built a temple of their own, and conformed to all the institutions prescribed in those books. That the Samaritan copy of the books of Moses was not then composed by the Jews, is evident from several very considerable differences between it and that of the Jews, and from its being written in a different character; the Samaritans not adopting the new and more elegant character which the Jews had learned in Chaldea, but retaining the more ancient one, in which it is probable they were originally written. That these books, containing new laws, and a new religion, should have been forged at that time, and imposed upon the Jews in one character, and on their enemies the Samaritans with variations in another, is too improbable to be admitted.

If

If the books of Moses were no forgery, we may take it for granted that none of the other books of the Old Testament, historical or prophetical, are so; because the former being received, no sufficient motive can be imagined for forging any of the rest if the attempt could have been successful; nor would the supposition answer any important purpose to unbelievers at this day.

Mr. Dupuis would have made a much more probable hypothesis, if he had maintained that the whole of the Jewish history was a fable; that as the twelve patriarchs (one of whom was Moses's great grandfather) denoted the twelve signs of the Zodiac, he also was either a star, or a planet; that the history of the descent into Egypt, and that of their escape from it, with their journeyings in the wilderness, and their settlement in Palestine, was a continuation of the same Arabian tale, a mere ingenious fiction; that there never was such a nation as that of the Israelites, with their kings David, Solomon, &c. and that those who now call themselves *Jews* are only the scattered remains of some horde of wandering Arabs, who have assumed that name, and pretend to an extraordinary descent. Also, since Jesus was the sun, and his twelve disciples the twelve signs of the Zodiac, and consequently the evangelical history a mere romance, that the *Acts of the Apostles*, and the whole of the subsequent



sequent history of the christian church is a sequel to it, and that they who call themselves *Christians*, and according to him are, without knowing it, worshippers of the sun, are a set of people, a *colluvies* of all nations, who like the gypsies, and free masons, have formed themselves into a body, tho' of a very heterogeneous kind, but are not able to give any rational account of their origin.

Since, however ; it is granted that there is such a people as the Jews, and since according to Mr. Dupuis they have, by some means or other, been completely deceived with respect to their history, and have been led to adopt a system of political and religious institutions to which they long had the greatest aversion, there must have been a time when the deception took place ; and considering that it is a whole nation that has been so deceived, it is the most extraordinary fact in all history, and in reality a greater miracle than any that are recited in the books of Moses.

The contriver of this history, or the author of these Arabian tales, must have been the boldest impostor that the world has ever known ; since he has very unnecessarily run the risk of introducing into his story things at which the spirit of any nation would have been sure to revolt, as the account of the behaviour of Abraham and Isaac with respect to their wives, the conduct of Jacob in taking

ing an ungenerous advantage of his brother's distress, the shocking story of two of his sons, Simeon and Levi, with respect to the Shechemites, the behaviour of Joseph's brethren in selling him for a slave, the story of Judah (the ancestor of the most respectable of all the twelve tribes) and his daughter-in-law Tamar, and their miserable servitude in Egypt. No other invented story was ever like this, and yet the success of the imposture has been complete.

If the histories of David and Solomon be parts of this romance, the story of the debauching of the wife of the brave Uriah, and the murder of the husband by the former, and the idolatry of the latter, to please his wives when he was old, were ill adapted to answer the purpose. But according to Mr. Dupuis, and other unbelievers, the Jews were never like any other men; so that it is in vain to apply to them the common principles of human nature, as we observe them in other people.

As every thing that is opprobrious must be said of the Hebrews and Jews, their being *barbarians*, destitute of all knowledge of science and the arts, never fails to make a part of the charge against them by all unbelievers. Mr. Dupuis intimates that the Jews, tho' worshippers of the sun, like the Egyptians, and other ancient nations, had no images, because they were not able to make any. But

this charge, tho' perpetually and confidently urged, is not supported by any facts.

The ancestors of this despised nation, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, appear to have been in the habits of civilized life, as much as any other people of that time. The behaviour of Abraham in the purchase of a burying ground for his wife shews much politeness, as well as wealth. Isaac and Jacob were not inferior to the Arab Sheiks. Joseph, tho' sold a slave, rose to be prime minister in Egypt, at that time in a very flourishing state. For with Mr. Dupuis's leave, I must here consider him as a man, and not a constellation in the Zodiac, and tho' unjustly enslaved in that country, the chiefs of the Israelites at least might see, and learn, all that was practiced by their masters.

The construction of the tabernacle in the wilderness, and much more the building of the temple of Solomon, shews that this horde of barbarians were not without a knowledge of such arts as were practiced in that age. In what manner soever they acquired them, justly or unjustly, they had much cattle, and great wealth, in gold, silver, and precious stones, when they left Egypt, \* and they were acquainted with the methods of using them.

Aaron

\* It is evident from this circumstance that their leaving Egypt was at leisure, and with the consent of the Egyptians at the time.

Aaron actually cast a golden calf, and on the twelve different kinds of precious stones were engraved the names of the twelve tribes. Moses wrote the books of his law, whether in the exact form of the present Pentateuch, or not. The tabernacle, besides being constructed of the most costly materials, and in the most exquisite manner, was furnished with vessels, and other things proper for libations, sacrifices, and other acts of worship. The cherubims that were over the ark were probably emblematical figures, with the heads of some or more animals. At least they had wings, which it required some skill to carve.

The Egyptians erected more stupendous works, tho' whether so early as this time is very uncertain. According to Herodotus, the building of the first pyramid must have been long after this; but no remains of any of their works imply more *art* and *skill* than appear in the construction of the tabernacle. And tho' they made use of hieroglyphics, we have no certain knowledge of any *books* composed by them. Herodotus makes no mention of any that they had even in his time, nor do any such appear to have been known to any of the Greeks, who did not want curiosity to make enquiry about them, and who would probably have been glad to translate, or copy from them.

There can be doubt, therefore, but that if the  
Hebrews



Hebrews had been disposed to make use of images in their worship, they could have made them, as well as the Egyptians. Jeroboam had calves at Dan and Bethel. And in that early age men did not require images of exquisite workmanship. According to the accounts of all travellers, the images in the Hindoo temples do not discover more ingenuity, or knowledge of any of the arts, than the Israelites possessed when they left Egypt. Some of their oldest images are little more than large stones in a conical form.

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#### SECTION IV.

##### *Of Christianity.*

THE principal object of Mr. Dupuis's elaborate work, and no doubt that of all unbelievers in Christian countries, is the overthrow of Christianity; and it is only *this* that they wish to wound thro' the sides of judaism; thinking that if one part of the system of revelation be overturned, the other part will fall with it. And on this account Mr. Dupuis represents the connection of christianity with judaism, and the most exceptionable parts of the writings of Moses, as of the strongest

est kind. "The whole of the christian religion," he says, vol. 3, p. 5, "is founded upon the allegory of the second chapter of Genesis. The incarnation of Christ was become necessary to repair the mischief that was introduced into the universe by the serpent, which seduced the first man and woman. The existence of Christ, the restorer, cannot be admitted as an historical fact, but on the supposition that the conversation between the serpent and the woman; and the introduction of evil (which was the consequence of it) was real and historical. If, p. 37, this pretended adventure be an allegory, the mission of Christ must be so too. These two doctrines cannot be separated."

Now I have shewn that the proper Mosaic history, and the Hebrew institutions contained in his writings, have no necessary connection with his account of the creation and fall of man. And if the Jewish religion have no necessary connection with it, much less has christianity; and in the New Testament there is not the least allusion to it; which, if it had been a necessary part of the same scheme, could not have been avoided.

Mr. Dupuis represents the account of the miraculous conception of Jesus as a necessary part of the christian scheme. This history, however, as given in the introductions to the gospels of Mathew and Luke, many christians in all ages, and especially

ally the Jewish christians, who must be allowed to have been the best judges in the case, never admitted. In my *History of early Opinions concerning Christ*, I have given my reasons at large why I think it is not entitled to any credit. But this does not in the least shake my faith in the history of the public life, the death, and resurrection of Jesus, written by proper witnesses.

The history of the fallen angels is another circumstance on which Mr. Dupuis lays much stress. "According to the christians," he says, vol. 1, p. 336. "there was from the beginning a division among the angels; some remaining faithful to the light, and others taking the part of darkness," &c. But this supposed history is not found in the scriptures. It has only been inferred from a wrong interpretation of one passage in the second epistle of Peter, and a corresponding one in that of Jude, as has been shewn by judicious writers. That there is such a person as *the Devil* is no part of my faith, nor that of many other christians; nor am I sure that it was the belief of any of the christian writers. Neither do I believe the doctrine of demonical possessions, whether it was believed by the sacred writers or not; and yet my unbelief in these articles does not affect my faith in the great facts of which the evangelists were eye and ear witnesses. They might not be competent judges in the one case, tho' perfectly so with respect to the other. Mr.

Mr. Dupuis also loads christiänity with many other doctrines which have been long exploded, as is well known, by many christians. He chuses to take no notice of any christians besides Roman Catholics, as if he had never heard of Protestants, or unitarians. If we had had no other accounts of the christian system besides this work of Mr. Dupuis, it would have been taken for granted that all christians were trinitarians. Jesus, he considers, vol. 1, p. 52, as the proper object of worship to all christians ; whereas the New Testament represents him in no other light than that of a great prophet, who taught the true worship of God, and announced, as from him, the great doctrine of a resurrection. And a more pious and humble worshipper of God, one more devoted to his will, in living and dying, never appeared in the world.

According to Mr. Dupuis, all christians hold the doctrine of the eternity of hell torments. *Treatise on the Mystries*, p. 151. And, contrary to what appears on the very surface of the evangelical history, he says, vol. 3, p. 53, "the evangelists have made Jesus to act, preach, and announce, the austerities which the Bramins and other devotees of the East still practice. In general," he adds, "this legend is more wonderful than amusing to read. It partakes a little of the austere sect of the Jews, and does not shine with respect to genius."

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But certainly Mr. Dupuis does not shine with respect to fidelity. For so far was Jesus from teaching, or practicing, any austerities, that for using less rigour than the Pharisees, or John the Baptist, they said of him, Matt. xi, 19, that he was *a gluttonous man and a wine bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners*. In a later age some of the monks, copying the heathens, practiced the austerities to which Mr. Dupuis alludes, but there is no recommendation of them in the New Testament.

To load christianity with tenets and practices which do not belong to it is nothing new. It proceeds from the usual artifice, or ignorance, of unbelievers. But what is, I believe, quite original in Mr. Dupuis (who, however, is not to be understood as advancing any opinion of his own) is that christianity is derived from Persia. "A branch of the Mythriacs," he says (*Treatise on the Mysteries*, p. 9,) is known by the name of the sect of christians. In reality," he says. (*Explanation of his Plates*, p. 12,) "Mithra and Christ were born on the same day, in a grotto or stable, Christ and Mithra regenerated the universe by the blood of a lamb, or of an ox; they died at the epocha of the revival of the light, as they were born in the season of darkness. They both had secret initiations, purifications, baptisms, confessions," &c.

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In the Persian system he finds both the doctrines and the practices of the Christians. "The consecration of bread," he says, vol. 3, p. 85, "which is one of the great mysteries in the Christian religion, is also found in the religion of Mithra, with the mystical words which produce it. The initiated of Mithra," he says, vol. 3, p. 207, "admitted the doctrine of a resurrection." In treating of the ancient Mysteries he says, p. 137, "the idea of the mystagogues, in exaggerating the pretended evils of another life, was the artifice that was chiefly employed by the Christians to draw to their party the common people, and the women. For," he adds, "it was in this class that at first they endeavoured to make profelytes.

One would think that a person who wrote in this manner could never have read the New Testament, but must have taken his idea of Christianity from the practices of the Roman Catholics only. What is there in the New Testament of the regeneration of the universe by the blood of a lamb, or an ox, of mysteries, initiations, purifications, confessions, or the consecration of bread? The doctrine of the resurrection was believed by the Jews before any account that we can collect concerning the religion of the Persians, which cannot with any certainty be traced higher than the reign of Darius Hystaspis; and Mr. Dupuis's ideas of the views and conduct

of the first preachers of Christianity are unsupported by any facts whatever, and make its reception by the powerful and the learned no less than a miracle.

Mr. Dupuis traces some things peculiar to christianity to a source even higher than the religion of the Persians. For the figures and names of the constellations are older than any thing in their country. Speaking of the constellation *Virgo*, he says, p. 164. "This same virgin was represented in the ancient spheres with a young child, to which she gave suck, and which they called Jesus, or Christ,\* whence arose the fable of the Christians

\* That the names of *Jesus*, or *Christ*, should be in any ancient sphere is in the highest degree improbable. The former is only the Greek method of writing *Josbua*, and the latter word is pure Greek, being a translation of *Messiah* which in the Hebrew signifies *anointed*. On this subject I must refer to my animadversions on Mr. Volney in my *Observations on the Increase of Infidelity*, and my *Letters* to him.

Mr. Dupuis quotes a passage in a work of Abulmazar, a Mahometan Astronomer who lived in the ninth century, in which he says, vol. 3, p. 46, that the virgin in the Zodiac held in her arms a child, "which some persons called Jesus, and which we in Greek call Christ." That is, some Christians in his time called this child Jesus. But what proof is this that this child was so called by any persons before the Christian æra? There is also

ans concerning the God of the day, and of the year, which sprung from the chaste loins of the virgin, at midnight, at the rising of the star which the Magi observed." How deeply learned in antiquity must the founders of the christian religion have been? Surely, they must have looked higher than the conversion of the common people, or of women.

This same child, however, suckled by the constellation Virgo, and of course one of the stars, we find presently advanced to a much higher rank. He is nothing less than the sun. "From the twelve great gods of Egypt" Mr. Dupuis says, as quoted before, vol. 1, p. 66, "the christians have taken their twelve apostles, the companion of God, the father of light, whose death and resurrection they celebrate, like that of Adonis in Phenicia, and Osiris in Egypt. Christ" he says, vol. 3, p. 118, has all the wonderful characters of Mithra, Adonis,

a star which some call *Cor Caroli*. But will it therefore follow that the name of king Charles of England was in any ancient sphere? And yet Mr. Dupuis triumphs in this argument. "What more," says he, p. 47, "can be demanded? They ask his *name*, and here are his two names. Can there be any mistake here? This passage is precise, and joined to other circumstances is of the greatest force." Indeed, it has as much force as any other argument in Mr. Dupuis's elaborate work.



Adonis, Osiris, &c. They all died, descended into hades, and rose again like him. He is the only son of an invisible father, placed beyond the visible universe, and who alone retains his image. Christ being the sun, the first day of the week," he says, vol. 3, p. 55, "is called *the Lords day*, while the others retain the ancient names of the planets to which they were dedicated, as *Monday, &c.*

Mr. Dupuis even finds this extraordinary doctrine of Christ being the sun in the gospel of John, who says, John, i, 9, that *he enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world*. He might have quoted a similar authority for the apostles being the sun, for Christ calls them *the light of the world*, Matt. v, 14.

Not content with deriving both the son and the mother from the heathen mythology, the christians, according to Mr. Dupuis, have from the same source got the mother of this virgin. "They have given," he says, vol. 3, p. 47, "to the virgin her mother *Anna*, an allegorical name, by which the Romans designated the revolution of the year, which they personified under the name of *Anna Perenna*, at the same epocha of time when the ancient year commenced." Now that Jews (for of that nation certainly were the writers of the New Testament, and all the primitive christians) should bor-

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row any thing from the Romans, whose religion they always regarded with the greatest abhorrence, would be thought extraordinary by scholars of a common class ; but in Mr. Dupuis what can be so ?

I shall tire the sensible reader with quoting these most extravagant absurdities, which hardly admit of a serious refutation ; but I must farther observe, that *the Apocalypse* furnishes Mr. Dupuis with the largest field for the display of his ingenuity and learning. This is a book in the interpretation of which he says (*Explanation of the plates*, p. 14) both Bossuet and Sir Isaac Newton have failed, but the real meaning of which was a discovery of his own, and he takes the pains to unfold the supposed mysteries contained in every chapter of it. And notwithstanding he says that he advances no opinion of his own, he maintains what no person ever did before, viz. that it is "a Phrygian work," vol. 3, p. 186. "All the fictions in the book," he says, p. 202, "are derived from the oriental mystagogues. The repetition of the same number, p. 221, which has such a striking relation to the divisions of astrology, leaves no room to doubt of the astrological character of this work of oriental mysticism. It is composed," he says, p. 275, "from scraps of Ezekiel and Daniel. The whole appears," p. 246, "the fruit of

a raised imagination, and which gives itself up to all the extravagancies of religious delirium." Enlarging farther on the object of it, he says, p. 303, "it was a religious curb, by which they endeavoured to preserve for a time the state of morals, which were falling into decay, and by which superstitious fear was awakened in ages of ignorance. Such was the object of the Apocalypse, in which the author makes a description of the mischiefs with which the universe was threatened on the approach of the general ruin, occasioned by the disorders of men." Here I would ask. If the inventors of this scheme of religion acted wisely in thus attempting to check the progress of vice, can Mr. Dupuis and other unbelievers be acting wisely in throwing down this barrier? Or have they some object different from the promotion of virtue.

Having traced all the articles abovementioned to a heathen source, Mr. Dupuis says, vol. 3, p. 150, "We might carry our system of resemblances much farther, and shew that the Christians have nothing peculiar to themselves; not only their mysteries, or their theology, but even their religious practices, their ceremonies, and their festivals. This is a work which I leave to others, unless a superabundance of leisure allow me to employ myself in this way, to demonstrate the *nature* of their religion, and its conformity with the most ancient religions;

a demonstration which the present inquiry into the *origin* of the religion does not require."

It is to be hoped that our author will find the leisure that may be necessary for this great work. It is certainly of much importance to Christians, who have hitherto known nothing either of the *origin*, or of the *nature*, of their religion; having now learned the former, to be instructed by the same hand in the latter; as it is not probable that any other person is possessed of the same means, or will do it so well. In the mean time, it may be of some use to him to hear a few plain observations on this part of his kind undertaking; and in this I will endeavour to be serious. But previous to this, besides the general account abovementioned, we must attend to a few farther particulars concerning the construction of this fabulous history, as Mr. Dupuis considers that of Christ and the apostles to be.

"The history," he says, vol. 3, p. 53, "which they have imagined for Christ is rather a sorrowful legend, than an ingenious poem," adding what I quoted before. "In general this legend is more wonderful than amusing to read, and does not shine with respect to ingenuity." Indeed, it is as plain and unadorned a narrative of facts as ever was written; and I doubt not affords little amusement to Mr. Dupuis, tho' by means of it he has furnished matter of amusement for his readers. The



The account, however, having the appearance of a regular history, and abounding with particulars of persons, times, and places, he could not avoid endeavouring to account for this circumstance; and with respect to it he says, vol. 3, p. 54. "Having made him to be born among the Jews, they subjected him and his mother to Jewish practices. They imagined a circumcision on the eighth day, and at the end of six weeks the mother goes to the temple to purify herself, like other Jewish women. They who fabricated the story have connected the supposed events of it not only with particular places, as Judea, but to a particular epocha, and to known names, as the age of Augustus and Tiberius, and that of Pontius Pilate, whom they have brought upon the scene near an hundred years after his death, when they contrived the romantic story of the god of light, born of a virgin, on the 25th of December, and triumphing over darkness on the 25th of March at the vernal equinox, in his passage into the lamb." Mr. Dupuis has even taken the pains to delineate and explain the exact position of the heavens at the time of the supposed birth of Christ, (*Explanation of Plates*, p. 13, vol. 3, p. 90,) with which as a great curiosity, before unknown to any Christians, I shall present my reader.

"The horoscope of the god of day at the time of  
of

of his birth in the winter solstice at midnight, on the 25th of December, the day on which the ancient marbles fix the birth of the invincible sun."

"The four quarters of the heavens were then occupied in the East by the virgin, and her rising son, as they are represented in the Persian spheres of Aben Ezra, and Abulmazar, with his names of Christ and of Jesus; in the Nadir by the goat Capricorn, in the West by the ram, or the celestial lamb, near to which shines the bull; and lastly in the Zenith by the ass, and the manger of Cancer. At the feet of the virgin is seen his bright star called Janus, who eight hours after opened the Roman year, holding the keys, with a bald forehead, as being the prince or the chief of the twelve months. Above the lamb, to the West, appear the three stars of the belt of Orion, vulgarly called at this day the *three kings of the Magi*. Can we desire a more exact resemblance to Christ born in a manger, by the side of these animals," &c. &c.

After so particular a description of our Saviour's horoscope, which will not fail to excite a smile in the intelligent reader, he will excuse me the trouble of transcribing Mr. Dupuis's elaborate explanation of it, as well as his equally elaborate commentary on each of the chapters of the Apoca-

Iypse, which makes a separate treatise in his work. Mr. Dupuis should have informed us what astrologer was present at the birth of Jesus, that we might be certified of the exactness of so important an horoscope. For the evangelists say nothing even of the season of the year in which he was born; nor do I think that he was born in a stable, or in any of the circumstances assumed by Mr. Dupuis. His death was, no doubt, at the time of the Jewish passover, which of course was near the vernal equinox, tho' not exactly so; but this is a circumstance on which no Christians ever laid any stress. His triumph over darkness, by which Mr. Dupuis supposes some allusion to the Persian mythology, is the arbitrary comment of his own. Christians know nothing of either *light* or *darkness*, in the sense in which he understands them.

As the twelve apostles are mentioned by name, and with several personal circumstances, in the gospel history, Mr. Dupuis could not avoid giving some account of *them*. "The number of the twelve apostles," he says, vol. 3, p. 47, "is that of the signs of the Zodiac, and of the secondary genii who presided in the signs. They were the twelve great gods of the Romans. The chief of these twelve genii had the ship, the keys of time, like the chief of the secondary gods of the Romans, or Janus, on whom our St. Peter was modelled.

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This Janus had his place in the heavens, in the same celestial sign in which we find his young master, that is, in the virgin mother of Christ, who every year opens a new solar revolution, as we may see in Plutarch. Thus the mother, the son, and the twelve apostles, are placed in the heavens, in the same point of the Zodiac which opens the revolution. If he had disciples, they are fixed at *seventy two*, a number still consecrated in the allegory of the sun; and *seven*, that of the planets, is every where consecrated in the Christian Mythriac religion."

Having thus allegorized the history of Christ and the apostles, Mr. Dupuis found it convenient to advance a little farther, to the protomartyr Stephen. "In the horizon," he says, vol. 3, p. 91, "is seen the constellation *Stephanos*, or the first *paranatellon*, of which they have made St. Stephen, the first person for whom they have made a festival day after that of the birth of Christ, viz. the 26th of December. He is followed by the eagle of St. John, whose festival is the 27th of the same month." But the New Testament says nothing of any of these festivals, any more than of these constellations, or the eagle of St. John. They were the inventions and additions of a much later period, and by persons who certainly knew little of astronomy. But it suits the purpose of Mr. Dupuis, and other unbelievers,



unbelievers, to connect with Christianity every absurd tenet, or practice, that has passed under that name. Tho' the corruption be ever so manifest, the system must be made answerable for it.

To vindicate a history so abundantly authenticated as that of the promulgation of Christianity is like undertaking to vindicate that of the Romans in the age of Augustus, which was co-incident with it, and not better known, or hitherto deemed, by friends or enemies, less unquestionable. And Mr. Dupuis is particularly unfortunate in the *time* that he has thought proper to pitch upon for the invention of this history, viz. as we have seen, near a hundred years after the death of Pilate. For this was in the life time of Justin Martyr, Irenæus, and other persons, who were writers, and whom he quotes, as real and not allegorical persons; and who, of course, must have known whether it was a fiction or truth; and in that age both Justin himself, and many others, died martyrs to their faith in it. Justin was by profession a Platonic philosopher, and always wore the habit that was peculiar to it, so that he was as little likely as any man to suffer for a fiction.

Mr. Dupuis, moreover, necessarily makes the inventors of the evangelical history profoundly learned, especially in astronomy and mythology; and surely such men as these could not have lived,  
and

and have continued, in absolute obscurity. They must have been well known to men of letters like themselves, and have left some other traces of their existence. But tho' Mr. Dupuis can discover their deep erudition, he is not able to find any trace of *themselves*, their names, place of residence, profession, &c. which is not a little extraordinary. It must also have been some surprize to himself to find so much learning and ingenuity among Jews.

How came that most curious work, as he considers it, the Apocalypse, written by some most profound philosopher (but surely not the only person of that age skilled in that kind of learning) not to have been understood before, and to have passed wholly unnoticed except by Christians, who put a very different construction upon it; considering it as a symbolical representation of future events, and not a concealed description of a mystagogical initiation? Could it be in the power of any person, of whatever ability, so completely to deceive all the world, christians and heathens? How came this great secret to be kept by the author and his friends so effectually, that the real meaning of it was not discovered before it was done by Mr. Dupuis, in so very distant a period of time, and under so great disadvantage; so many records of ancient learning being perished. He could not be possessed

fed of so many materials for the investigation as those who were co-temporary with the writer, or who lived before the general destruction of books, and other monuments of learning, in the dark ages that followed.

Many persons will hardly believe that Mr. Dupuis can be serious in treating the gospel history as an allegory ; since there is all the evidence that is ever required in similar cases, and much stronger than in any other case of the kind, that the four gospels, and the other books of the New Testament, were written by the persons to whom they are usually ascribed, and consequently while the transactions recorded in them were recent ; so that the persons into whose hands they immediately came were judges of the truth of the accounts. And these books having been by them transmitted to us as genuine and true histories, we have their testimony in addition to that of the writers, to the authenticity of the gospel history.

To say nothing of Paul, who, however, was an apostle, five of the original twelve apostles were writers, viz. Matthew, Peter, James, John, and Jude ; and if we judge by the quotations of them in other writers of the time immediately following, there is much more evidence of the writings usually ascribed to them having been really written by them, than there is that the works of Sallust, Cice-

ro or Cæsar, were written by persons who were known by these names. There is therefore less evidence of the real personal existence of these men than there is of that of the apostles.

The books that compose the New Testament are quoted by all cotemporary and subsequent writers, as the production of that age, and they contain as much evidence of the internal kind as is ever expected in a like case, viz. their containing an account of persons and events of those times, and none later. Peter quotes the epistles of Paul as well known, and the meaning of which had been perverted; which implies that much attention was given to them, and Paul himself was then living. For it is said that they both suffered martyrdom at Rome in the reign of Nero.

Besides the unanimous testimony of early Christian writers, that the gospels were written before the destruction of Jerusalem, it may be clearly inferred from the *Acts of the Apostles*, which was never doubted to have been written by the author of the Gospel of Luke. In the *Acts of the Apostles* we have a very circumstantial account of the travels of the apostle Paul, and it ends with his confinement at Rome, which must have been A. D. 62; and in the Introduction to it he mentions his *former work*, which was therefore, no doubt, written before that time. In any similar case, such evidence



dence as this, when uncontradicted by any other, is always admitted as satisfactory.

As to Tacitus, who gives an account of the persecution of the Christians by Nero, and says, "they had their name from Christ, who was put to death in the reign of Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was procurator of Judea," Mr. Dupuis says, vol. 3, p. 150, that "he wrote near one hundred and twenty years after the time of Christ, and that he took his account from Christians without any examination of his own; but that this will no more prove the existence of Christ than his making mention of Osiris after the Egyptians, or the mention of Brahma by a French writer at this day after the Hindoos, will prove *their* existence."

This, however, is an acknowledgment that, if not Tacitus himself, the Christians of that early age, and who by his account were a *great multitude* in Rome, were persuaded of the real existence of Jesus Christ; and some of them, who had so much at stake, would surely satisfy themselves whether there ever had been such a person.

But Mr. Dupuis gives a very erroneous account of the age of Tacitus, concerning which he might very easily have satisfied himself. He was born towards the end of the reign of Claudius, or the beginning of that of Nero, he was much favoured and promoted to dignities by Vespasian and his sons,  
and

and he died about seventy years after the death of Christ ; and consequently about only thirty years after that of the generality of the apostles ; so that whether he made any regular inquiry or not, he could not well avoid hearing some authentic account of a body of men so recent, and so numerous. It is plain that he wrote without any doubt on the subject. Let any writer be produced so near to the supposed time of Osiris, or Brahma, who shall speak of them as Tacitus does of Christ, and Mr. Dupuis, I am confident, would not hesitate to allow that there really were such men.

Mr. Dupuis, however, when he wrote this must have forgotten that he has laid the scene of the invention of the fable concerning Christ near a hundred years after the death of Pontius Pilate. Consequently there could not have been any Christians at all in the reign of Nero, or in his own life time. Into such absurdities, and contradictions, will strong prepossessions betray men.

I do not find that Mr. Dupuis gives any account of the mention of Christ as a real person in the *Letters of Pliny*, or the history of Suetonius, who wrote not long after the time of Nero. From these writers it appears that the Christians were then numerous in all parts of the Roman empire ; which comprehended Judea as well as Spain, so that intelligence was easily communicated from one extremi-

ty of this vast empire to the other. It was a highly civilized age, and abounded more with writers than any other period of antiquity before or after it; and at this time Judea, on account of its rebellion, was a very interesting scene, the country being reduced from a state of great population and opulence to utter desolation, such as there is no example of in any other history. The Christians being all this time exposed to persecution, the facts on which their religion was founded could not fail to interest both its friends and its enemies in the highest degree; so that they could not escape a thorough investigation. That an imposition, such as Mr. Dupuis supposes Christianity to have been, should succeed in such an age as this, and in such circumstances as these, must have been perfectly miraculous; and I do not imagine that Mr. Dupuis would be a willing advocate for miracles.

Josephus makes no mention of Jesus, or of Christians, tho' he was cotemporary with the writers above mentioned, probably because he did not chuse to say any thing in their favour, and he had nothing to say against them. But he mentions John the Baptist, and the apostle James, with much respect; and if they were real human beings, and not constellations, their relation to Jesus will prove his existence and history.

If the history of Jesus and the twelve apostles  
be

be an allegory, that of Paul and the Acts of the Apostles, which is a continuation of the gospels, must be allegorical also; and so must the next period of ecclesiastical history, which is connected with it, and yet Mr. Dupuis quotes Justin Martyr, as well as other Christians writers of that age, as out of the region of allegory, and within that of real existence. He would have written much more plausibly, if he had maintained that if there ever were such persons as Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Origen, Clemens Alexandrinus, or Eusebius, &c. some persons in the dark ages composed the writings which are ascribed to them for their amusement, and imposed them on the world as the genuine productions of an early age; that the history of the conversion of Constantine, is as much a fable as that of his baptism by pope Silvester, and his donations to the church of Rome; or that the Christian name was unknown till about the time of the Reformation by Luther. All these things are so connected, that it is impossible to separate them. If the history of the Reformation by Luther be a real history, so must that of the Christian church in the age preceding it, and till the time of the apostles, and that of Christ himself.

I shall conclude this article with what I observed on the subject, immediately after I first heard of it, in my *Letters to the Philosophers and Politicians of France*,



*France*, p. 29. "Serious as the subject is, it is not possible to forbear smiling at such palpable ignorance. I shall expect that the same writers will soon attempt to allegorize the history of Julius Cæsar, and maintain that no such person ever existed. For there is not an hundredth part of the evidence for the existence of Julius Cæsar that there is for that of Jesus Christ. Hereafter the history of France itself may be allegorized, and the very names of Lewis, Demouriez, and Pethion, may be derived from ancient languages, and the present war of your Republic against the despots of Europe be said to mean nothing more than the war of the elements of nature."

"If I had not seen so much of the power of prejudice, I should wonder that so many men of unquestionable good sense among you, and even able writers, should have given so little attention as they have done to *natural probability* in judging concerning an historical subject."

## APPENDIX.

## APPENDIX.

*Of the Allegorizing Talents of Mr. Boulanger.*

MR. DUPUIS was not the first to turn the scripture history into allegory. In this he has only followed the example of Mr. Boulanger; and as a specimen of the great learning and ability of the latter in this field, I shall, by way of Appendix to these Remarks on the work of Mr. Dupuis, give a pretty large analysis of his *Dissertation on St. Peter*, contained in the fourth volume of his works. And the reader must not be surprized if, in explaining the history of this apostle, he goes farther back into antiquity than might naturally be expected.

An old Phrygian tradition, preserved in Suidas, says that before the time of Deucalion, the first king of Phrygia called *Nannacus*, *Annacus*, or *Cannacus*, was informed by an oracle, that after his death all things would perish, an event which he lamented with many tears, whence came the proverb *to weep like Annacus*. (*Universal History*, vol. 5, p. 513.) This Annacus (for of the three names it was most convenient for Mr. Boulanger to make choice of this,

this, and, rejecting the Greek termination, to reduce it to *Annac*) he makes to be the same with Moses's, *Enoch*, who died a year before the flood; and because Enoch lived 365 years, he makes him to be the same with the sun, who completes his annual revolution in so many days; and because he immediately renews his course again, and therefore never properly dies, Enoch, he says, is said to have been translated without dying.

Passing from the Asiatic to the Roman history, which began with this of Asia; he observes, that since *Aeneas* (whose name he reduces to *Aeneach*) was remarkable for his weeping as well as his piety, he also may be the same with *Annac*. And tho' Anchyses the father was not translated, yet (which, he says, is perhaps the same fable transposed) his wife Creusa was carried away by Venus while Troy was in flames.

From the same origin Mr. Boulanger derives the name of *Noah*, "another historical and perfect Enoch, or true Annac," and by a farther curious management of etymologies, the particulars of which I omit, he makes him the same person with *Hermes*, or Mercury, the great founder of religion and laws.

Now because the apostle Peter wept as Annacus did, he also must be the same person with him. Like Noah, and Enoch, Peter foretold the end of the

the world; and like Hermes, he was "the fabricator of the thunders of religion." He is therefore the same with them; and because *keys* are given to Peter, and he repented at the crowing of a *cock*, he is no other than the Roman god *Janus*, who is represented with keys in his hand, and a cock at his feet. There is another circumstance of resemblance between them, in that the name of *Janus* is derived from *janua*, a *gate*, and the history of Peter, as Mr. Boulanger observes, abounds with reference to gates or doors. The gates of hell were not to prevail against him. He was near the door, or gate, when he denied his master, and at the gate of the temple when he and John restored the lame man. When he was in prison the gates were miraculously opened to let him out. When he found himself at liberty, he went and knocked at the door of a house, which a servant opened to him. When he was at the gates of Rome (for Mr. Boulanger makes no distinction between genuine history and fabulous legends) Jesus met him, and made him promise to submit to crucifixion; and to complete the allusion to gates, he was crucified on the Janiculum.

Mr. Boulanger has still more to say on the subject of *Janus*, and of *gates*. It is the prerogative of this god to open the day, and to have all prayers begin with his name. He also delivered the Romans



mans from the Sabines by a miracle at the Viminal gate. "The difference between these legends," he says, "arises from the difference of languages, which are more or less favourable to them. Our modern Janus," (meaning Peter)" he adds "was the son of John" (Bar-Jonas) "which signifies *benovolent, merciful, one who grants pardons*; and it is therefore the primitive root of the Latin Janus, whom the Salian priests called *Jane, Jones*, and sometimes *Jon*."

Peter, he farther says, is sometimes called *Cephas*, and this he derives either from a Hebrew word, which signifies to *deliver*, set at *liberty*, or from another which signifies to *bind* or *enchain*; and the power of *binding and loosing* is given to this apostle. But nothing is better known than that *Cephas* has precisely the same meaning in Hebrew that *Peter* has in Greek, so that they are perfectly synonymous, like the *Messiah* and *Christ*.

"This turn for allegory," he says, "we find in the profession of Peter, and in the town to which he belonged. He was a fisherman, and of Bethsaida, which signifies *the house of fishermen*. It was situated on the lake of Genesareth, not far from Gath-Epher, the ancient abode of the prophet Jonas. "Nothing" he says, "can equal Cabbalistic sagacity. It overlooks nothing. In consequence of this the ship of Peter is found in the medals of

Janus,

Janus, the ark of Noah, and the ship of Jonas; and all the three were exposed to great danger on the sea."

"If we attend," he says, "to the sound of the word *Peter*, which is the same with *Petra*, a rock, it may be derived from a Phenician word which signifies to *open*," as Peter does the gate of heaven; and "from the same word," he says, "we have another mythological Being, viz. *Baal Peor*, worshipped by the Moabites and Midianites; and this is the same with the antient Janus of Phenicia. The Israelites who began their journey thro' the wilderness with the worship of the golden calf, naturally ended it with that of Baal Peor; being then at the *opening*, or *entrance*, of the land of Canaan; and there Moses, who was not to enter that country, died. This piece of history," he says, "is worthy of the Hebrew genius, and so the whole of this part of the history appears to me to be nothing but an allegory, in which places are adjusted to names, and names to places, or where facts are sacrificed to fancy, as in the rest of their annals. If this Moses, whose sepulchre could never be found, whom the Rabbins say was translated like Enoch, and whom Peter saw on mount Tabor, together with Elias, (another ape of Enoch) was not the same with the god Peor, the supposition is not, however, improbable."

Thus by the dexterous management of etymolo-

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gies Mr. Boulanger has shown that old Annacus of Phrygia, Æneas of Troy, Hermes of Egypt, and Janus at Rome, in prophane history; and Enoch, Noah, Baal Peor, Elijah, Jonah, and probably Moses too, in sacred history, were the same person with the apostle Peter, and that they all represented the sun. With the same plausibility he might have added to them Pharaoh king of Egypt, Senacherib of Assyria, Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, Cyrus of Persia, and Alexander the Great. For at some time or other they had probably all of them *wept*, entered houses or cities by *doors* or *gates*, and in other characteristic circumstances mentioned by this writer have resembled the prince of apostles. And their wives might have been the same with the wife of Peter, and she no other than the moon; since she would be as well qualified to shine in that orb, as her husband in that of the sun. Moreover, since, as Mr. Boulanger says, "Cabalistic sagacity overlooks nothing," even Peter's wife's mother may find a place in this curious allegory. Much has been said of the credulity of Christians, but what is it compared to that of many unbelievers? But let us hear Mr. Boulanger's general observations on this subject.

"Such," says he, "is the conclusion of this history, fabulous indeed, but of great antiquity, and I discover in it things that we did not know before. We were ignorant, for example, that when mankind

kind changed paganism for Christianity, the gods themselves were not the last to change; and that many of them quitted the poetical heaven, for the Christian paradise. It was, no doubt, well for them to do so, but better for us to learn it now, after being ignorant of it so many ages. It remains to be seen whether they are to continue in their places long. We are now in the habit of chasing away these objects of popular credulity, tho' hitherto we have directed our views to little things only; whereas we ought to begin the attack with the chiefs of these beatified idols, since the rout of the army follows the capture of the general. I have now taken one of them, and, Gentlemen theologians, I deliver him up to you. *Strike the Shepherd and the Sheep will be scattered.* The prophecies must be accomplished."

"When we shall have analyzed in this manner a score of these ancient and modern legends, we may perhaps arrive at the knowledge of the true system of sacred and profane mythology. The specimen I have here exhibited is of sufficient extent, and sufficiently diversified, to enable us to draw from it a general lesson, and *principles*, which the others can only confirm."

If any person, a competent judge of the subject, can peruse this miserable rhapsody, delivered in this confident manner, without a smile of indignation, or contempt, he has more command of himself



self than I can pretend to. In opposition to it, I will venture to say that there is hardly any history whatever that has more marks of natural character, and of probability in the events, than that of Peter, as it may be collected from the Evangelists, with the Acts of the apostles, and his own writings. And respect to external evidence, his existence is better authenticated than that of Mr. Boulanger himself, now that he is dead. It is remarkable, however, that tho' he makes a mere allegory of the history of Peter, he appears to have entertained no doubt of the literal truth of that of Paul, whom he supposes to have been the real founder of Christianity. He might with as much reason maintain that the history of Pompey was a fable, while that of Julius Cæsar was real.

Aburd in the extreme as is this specimen of the writings of Mr. Boulanger, one of the great champions of modern infidelity, I have found nothing better in any of them. They abound in the most impudent and unfounded assertions with respect to fact, and what is most obviously futile with respect to reasoning. But confident assertion goes very far with those who are ignorant of a subject, and especially if they be previously disposed in favour of what is plausibly recommended to them; and that this is the case with the generality of those who abandon Christianity cannot be denied.

THE  
L A W S  
AND  
INSTITUTIONS OF MOSES

METHODIZED.

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*The principal Object of the Hebrew Religion and  
some general Maxims of it.*

1. **T**HE great object of the Hebrew religion was to preserve in the world the important knowledge of the unity of god, and of his administration of the affairs of the world, in opposition to the universally prevailing polytheism and idolatry, and the abominable and horrid rites to which they led, by which human nature was most deplorably debased, and men rendered miserable. In order to effect this great purpose, the rites of the

the Hebrew worship were calculated to be opposed to those of the Heathens, the more effectually to guard the Hebrews from idolatry, to which an imitation of their customs would have led.

2. Many things, however, the Hebrew religion had in common with those of other nations. But these were probably such customs as had been prior to any idolatry. All nations had sacrifices, ideas of impurity, and modes of purification. They also had temples, as well as altars, tho' it is not certain that any thing of this kind was known to the heathens before the erection of the Hebrew tabernacle, or even the temple of Solomon.

3. A strict ritual was absolutely necessary to prevent superstition. Had every person been allowed to sacrifice what and where he pleased, there would have been room for endless fancies, and of course superstition, that is, laying an undue stress on particular observances. That observances enjoined by God had no particular virtue, and would avail nothing without moral virtue, the Hebrew nation had the most solemn and repeated assurance.

4. The Supreme Being having set apart the Hebrew nation to be his peculiar people, to be distinguished from all other nations by certain rites and privileges, he entered into a kind of *covenant* with them for that purpose ; and they were to bear the mark of it on their flesh, to remind them of their descent,

descent, and their peculiarly high destination. For this purpose they were circumcised, an operation performed first on Abraham at the time that Esau was eight days old, and to be performed ever after on the eighth day after the birth.

5. In consequence of God's having spared the first born of the Israelites, when those of the Egyptians were destroyed, and perpetually to remind them of this great interposition in their favour, he claimed a peculiar right to every first born of them, even of all their cattle (for the judgement extended to the cattle of the Egyptians, as well as to the Egyptians themselves) and he accepted the tribe of Levi in stead of them. And whereas it appeared on the enumeration that there were more first born in the other eleven tribes than individuals in that of Levi, the remainder were redeemed in a manner particularly prescribed; which shewed that the God of Israel would have no human sacrifices, not even of those whose lives he might have claimed for that purpose.

6. In the original constitution of the Hebrew government, the nation was to be under the immediate direction of God himself. They were in all cases of great emergency to apply to him as their first magistrate. Their laws were enacted by him, and he had a place of residence among them. Particular persons were appointed to be the medium  
of



of his intercourse with him, and they were directed with respect to the manner of conducting it. When they had judges, and even kings, which was a departure from the original plan (a case which, however, being foreseen, was provided for) they were considered in no other light than Gods vicegerents, acting under him; and they were appointed not by the people, but by God himself. This was done in the case of Saul, and of David, and even with respect to the kings of Israel.

The peculiar relation that the Supreme Being originally bore to the Hebrew nation continues to this day, and is to do so to the end of time. They flourish in consequence of their observance of the religion prescribed to them, and are punished for their departures from it. Their present dispersed and calamitous state was clearly foretold by Moses, as also their future restoration to the divine favour. For tho' they may forsake and forget their God, he will never forsake or forget them. The discipline, ordinary and extraordinary, to which they are subjected will in a course of time produce its proper effect.

7. The ultimate object of this extraordinary dispensation was by no means the honour, or advantage, of one favourite nation; but by their history and discipline the great universal parent gives the most important lessons of instruction to all his offspring

offspring of mankind. By means of this one nation have all other nations, that have acquired the knowledge, been taught the great doctrine of the unity of God, and the purity of his worship. By this medium only have they been reclaimed from idolatry, and, from the horrid and abominable customs and degrading superstitions derived from it. In no case whatever has the mere reason of man been sufficient for this salutary purpose. By this means the Supreme Being has preserved upon the minds of men a sense of their dependance on himself, and of their obligation to him; a sentiment of infinite importance; as, besides leading them to every proper act of devotion, it tended to impress the minds of all men with the idea of their common relation to one God and father, and thereby to lead them to consider each other as brethren, entitled to every kind office that they can render to each other.

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*The Introduction, containing an Account of the Circumstances attending the Delivery of the Law.*  
Ex. xxix, 1...25.

P A R T I.

*Laws relating to Idolatry.*

*Section 1.* General Prohibitions. Ex. xx, 22, 23, xxiii, 13, Lev. xix, 4, Ex. xxii, 20, Lev. xxvi, 1, 2.

*Section 2.* The Canaanites to be exterminated on account of their idolatry. Ex. xxxiv, 10...17, Num. xxxiii, 50...56, Deut. vii, 1...6, xii, 1...4, 29...32, xx, 16...18.

*Section 3.* The land to be considered as unclean for some time on that account. Lev. xix, 23...25.

*Section 4.* The punishment of idolatrous Israelites. Deut. xvii, 2...7, xiii, 1...18.

*Section 5.* Particular idolatrous rites forbidden. Lev. xx, 18, xviii, 21, xx, 22...26, Deut. xviii, 9...14, Lev. xix, 31, 26, xx, 27, Ex. xxii, 18, Deut. xvi, 21, 22, Lev. xix, 29, Deut. xxiii, 17, 18, xxii,



xxii, 5, Lev. xviii, 22...30, Deut. xiv, 1, 2, Ex. xxxiv, 26, Deut. xiv, 21, Lev. xix, 27, 28, 19, Deut. xxii, 9...12, Num. xv, 37...41.

## P A R T II.

### *Criminal and Civil Laws.*

*Section 1.* Of Courts of Judicature. Deut. xvi, 18, xvii, 8...13.

*Section 2.* General maxims, Lev. xxiv, 22, Deut. xxiv, 16, xvi, 19, 20, Lev. xxiv. 18...21, Ex. xxi, 22...25, Lev. v, 1, Deut. xix, 15...21, xxv, 1, 2, 3, xxi, 22, 23.

*Section 3.* Crimes punishable with death, Lev. xxiv, 10...16, 23, 17, Ex. xxi, 12, 17, Deut. xxiv, 7, Ex. xxi, 28...32, Lev. xx, 9...18, Deut. xxi, 18...21, Deut. xxii, 22...27, Lev. xx, 11, 12, Ex. xxii, 19.

*Section 4.* Of places of Refuge, and of Murder by persons unknown. Num. xxxv, 9...34, Deut. xix, 1...13, iv, 41...43, xxi, 1...9.

*Section 5.* Crimes not punishable with death.  
Ex.

Ex. *xxi*, 18, 19, *xxii*, 6, Num. v, 5...8, Ex. *xxii*, 1...5, *xxi*, 33...36, *xxii*, 7...15, Deut. *xxv*, 11, 12.

*Section 6.* Laws relating to slaves. Ex. *xxi*, 20, 21, 26, 27.

*Section 7.* Laws relating to women. Deut. *xxii*, 25...29, Ex. *xxii*, 16, 17, Lev. *xix*, 20...22, Deut. *xxi*, 15...17, Lev. *xviii*, 1...21, *xx*, 19...21, Deut. *xxii*, 30, 13...21, *xxv*, 5...10, *xxiv*, 1...4, Num. *xxvii*, 1...11, *xxxvi*, 1...13, Num. v, 11...31.

### P A R T III.

#### *Precepts of Morality.*

*Section 1.* The ten commandments. Ex. *xx*...21, Deut. v, 1...33.

*Section 2.* Precepts relating to piety. Lev. *xix*, 1, 2, *xvii*, 12.

*Section 3.* Precepts relating to Justice. Ex. *xxii*, 6, 7, Lev. *xvii*, 15, *xix*, 35...37, Ex. *xxiii*, 8, Lev. *xvii*, 11, Ex. *xxiii*, 1...3, Lev. *xvii*, 16, Deut. *xxv*, 13...16, Lev. *xvii*, 13, Deut. *xxiii*, 24, 25, Deut. *x*, 14, Lev. *xviii*, 20, Deut. *xx*, 8.

*Section 4.* Precepts relating to benevolence and  
mercy.

mercy. Lev. xvii, 18, Deut. xxii, 1...5, Ex. xxiii, 4, 5, xxii, 22...24, Lev. xvii, 14, Deut. xxiv, 6, Ex. xxii, 25...27, Lev. xxv, 35...38, Deut. xxiii, 19, 20, Deut. xxiv, 10...13, Deut. xxiii, 15, 16.

*Section 5.* Precepts relating to strangers and slaves. Ex. xxiii, 9, xxii, 21, Lev. xix, 33, 34, Deut. xxiv, 14, 15, 17, 18, Lev. xvii, 9, 10, xxiii, 22, Deut. xxiv, 19...22.

*Section 6.* Precepts relating to brute animals. Deut. xxv, 4.

*Section 7.* Miscellaneous precepts. Lev. xvii, 17, xix, 3...32.

## P A R T IV.

### *Rules relating to Food.*

Lev. vii, 26, 27, xvii, 10, 16, Ex. xxii, 31, Lev. vii, 22...25, Lev. xi, 1...47, Deut. xiv, 3...21.

P A R T V.

*Rules relating to Defilement.*

*Section 1.* Of the leprosy. Num. v, 1...4, Lev. xiii, 1...59, xiv, 1...57, Deut. xxiv, 8, 9.

*Section 2.* Of uncleanness to which men chiefly are liable. Lev. xv, 1...18, v, 23, Deut. xxiii, 10, 11, Lev. vii, 21, Deut. xxiii, 12...14.

*Section 3.* Of uncleanness incident to women. Lev. xii, 1...8, xv, 19...33, xviii, 19.

*Section 4.* Of the water of purification. Num. xix, 1...22.

P A R T VI.

*Of Festivals and Fasts.*

*Section 1.* Of the festivals in general. Ex. xxiii, 14...17, xxxiv, 22...24, Deut. xvi, 16, 17.

*Section 2.* Of the sabbath. Ex. xxx, 12...17, xxxv, 1...3, xxiii, 12, xxxiv, 21, Lev. xix, 30, xxiii, 1, 2 3, Num. xviii, 9, 10, xv, 32...36.

*Section 3.*



*Section 3.* Of the Sabbatical year, and the Jubilee. Ex. xxiii, 10, 11, xxi, 1...6, Lev. xxv, 1...34, 39...55, Deut. xv, 1...18, xxxi, 9...13.

*Section 4.* Of the Passover, and the feast of unleavened bread. Ex. xii, 1...30, 40...49, xiii, 1...16, xxxiv, 25, Num. xxviii, 16...25, Ex. xxxiv, 18, Lev. xxiii, 4...8, Num. ix, 1...14, Deut. xvi, 1...8.

*Section 5.* Of Pentecost. Lev. xxiii, 15...21, Deut. xvi, 9...12.

*Section 6.* Of the feast of trumpets, and of tabernacles. Lev. xxiii, 23...25, Num. xxix, 1...6, Lev. xxiii, 33...44, Num. xxix, 12...40, Deut. xvi, 13...15.

*Section 7.* Of the new moon. Num. xxviii, 11...15.

*Section 8.* Of the day of Expiation. Lev. xvi, 1...34, xxiii, 26...32, Num. xxix, 7...11.

## P A R T VII.

### *Of the first Fruits.*

Ex. xxii, 29, 30, xxiii, 19, Lev. ii, 12, xxiii, 9...14,

9...14, Num. xxviii, 26...31, Deut. xxvi, 1...19.

P A R T VIII.

*Of the Tabernacle, and the things contained in it.*

*Section 1.* Of the tabernacle in general, and the erection of it. Ex. xxv, 1...9, xxxi, 1...11, xxxix, 32...43, xl, 1...11, 17...35.

*Section 2.* The inclosure and the coverings. Ex. xxvi, 1...37, xxvii, 9...19, xxxvi, 8...38, xxxviii, 9...31.

*Section 3.* Of the altar of burnt offering, and of altars in general. Ex. xxvii, 1...8, xxxviii, 1...7, xx, 24...26.

*Section 4.* Of the laver. Ex. xxx, 17...21, xxxviii, 8.

*Section 5.* Of the ark of the covenant. Ex. xxv, 10...22, xxxvii, 1...16.

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*Section 6.*

*Section 6.* Of the altar of incense. Ex. xxx, 1...10, xxxvii, 25...28.

*Section 7.* Of the table of shew bread. Ex. xxv, 23...30, Lev. xxiv, 5...9.

*Section 8.* Of the golden candlestick. Ex. xxv, 31...40, xxvii, 20, 21, xxxvii, 17...24, Lev. xxiv, 1...4, Num. viii, 1...4.

*Section 9.* Of the holy oil. Ex. xxx, 22...29.

*Section 10.* Of the trumpets. Num. x, 1...10.

*Section 11.* Of the consecration of the tabernacle and its utensils. Lev. ix, 1...24.

## PART IX.

P A R T IX.

*Of Offerings.*

*Section 1.* What may be offered. Ex. xxxiv, 19, 20, Deut. xv, 19...23, Lev. xxii, 26...28, Deut. xvii, 1, Ex. xxiii, 18.

*Section 2.* Of the place where offerings must be made and eaten. Lev. xvii, 1...9, xxii, 23...33, Deut. xii, 5...28.

*Section 3.* Of burnt offerings. Lev. i, 1...17, vi, 8...13, Num. xv. 1...16.

*Section 4.* Of meat offerings. Lev. ii, 1...16, vi, 14...18, x, 12...15.

*Section 5.* Of peace offerings. Lev. iii, 1...17, xix, 5...8, vii, 11...20, 28...34.

*Section 6.* Of sin offerings, and trespass offerings. Lev. iv, 1...35, vi, 24...30, Num. xv, 22...31, Lev. v, 14...19, vi, 1...7, vii, 1...10.

*Section 7.* Of the daily offerings. Num. xxviii, 1...8, Ex. xxix, 38...46.

*Section 8.*



*Section 8.* Of offerings on numbering the people, and on entering the land of Canaan. Ex. xxx, 11...16, Num. xv, 17...21.

## P A R T X.

### *Of the Priests and Levites.*

*Section 1.* Of their appointment. Num. iii, 11...22, 39...51, iv, 46...49.

*Section 2.* Their qualifications. Lev. xxi, 1...24, xxii, 1...9, x, 8...11.

*Section 3.* Their consecration. Ex. viii, 1...28, xxix, 1...37, xl. 13...16, Num. viii, 5...26, Lev. vi, 19...23, vii, 35...38.

*Section 4.* Their duty. Num. iii, 5...10, xviii, 1...7.

*Section 5.* Their habits. Ex. xxviii, 1...43, xxxix, 1...31.

*Section 6.* Their maintenance. Num. xviii, 8...24, Lev. xxii, 10...16, Deut. xviii, 1...8, Num.

Num. xxxv, 1...8, xviii, 25...32, Deut. xiv, 22...  
36, Lev. xxvii, 30...34, Deut. xiv, 27...29.

P A R T XI.

*Of the Nazarites.*

Num. vi, 1...21.

P A R T XII.

*Of Vows.*

Num. xxx, 1...16, Lev. xxvii, 1...29, Deut.  
xxiii, 21...23, Lev. xxii, 17...25, v, 4...13.

PART XIII.

## P A R T XIII.

*Laws of War.*

Deut. xx, 1...15, xxiv, 5, xxiii, 9, xx, 19, 20, xxi, 10...14.

## P A R T XIV.

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*Section 2.* Future prophets promised. Deut. xviii, 15...22.

*Section 3.* Directions concerning kings. Deut. xvii, 14...20.

*Section 4.* Orders concerning the Amalekites. Deut. xxv, 17...19.

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## PART XV.

P A R T XV.

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A N

A D D R E S S

T O T H E

J E W S.

*Descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,*

**B**E not offended at a Christian, who from his early years has entertained the greatest respect and veneration for your nation, and who in this work has endeavoured to vindicate the honor of your religion, and to evince its superiority to all other ancient religions, to address you on the present extraordinary situation of the world in general, and of yourselves in particular. The state of the world at large has, in the great plan of providence, always borne a particular relation to you, as the *peculiar people of God*, as separated from other nations, to be the instructors of mankind in what most of all concerns them, viz. *religion,*

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*gion,*

*gion*, in the knowledge and worship of the one true God ; and it has been by means of your nation that this most valuable knowledge, the only antidote to a wretched and debasing superstition, has been preserved in the world.

While all other nations, several of them more advanced in civilization than yourselves, were sunk in the grossest polytheism and idolatry, and in consequence of it adopted rites the most shocking to humanity and decency, your institutions held out to the world the purest worship of the great maker of all things, and the most solemn and decent forms of conducting that worship ; a religion subservient to the purest morality, the fundamental principles of which the religions of other nations continually incited them to violate.

Permit me to express the high sense I have of the honour you have done yourselves, and your religion, by your unshaken faith in its divine origin, and the firmness with which you have borne such trials as no other people were ever exposed to, and for a length of time that might have been thought sufficient to exhaust the patience of man. But, firmly persuaded of the righteous, tho' unsearchable, ways of providence, and having the most glorious prospects before you, your faith is as firm at this day as it was two thousand years ago.

You see in the writings of Moses the clearest  
fore-sight

foresight of your present dispersion into every part of the known world, and all the circumstances of suffering and reproach attending it. But in the same writings you read the most express promises of your restoration and final glory. And the same power that has executed his threatnings, and to the astonishment of the world preserved you to this day a separate nation, tho' mixed with all others, will, no doubt, in his due time, accomplish every thing that he has promised in your favour.

1. You are destined, in the wise councils of God, to be the first of nations, and your faith and patience will be crowned with an abundant reward. Great beyond example as have been your sufferings, the sure word of prophecy assures you they will bear no sensible proportion to the happiness that awaits you. You know what the prophet Isaiah says on this subject, Ch. liv. 5. *Thy maker is thy husband, the Lord of hosts is his name, and thy redeemer the holy one of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called. For Jehovah hath called thee as a woman forsaken, and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when then wast refused, saith thy God. For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee, for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee*



*thee saith the Lord thy redeemer. For this is as the waters of Noah unto me. For as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I will not be wroth with thee nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord who hath mercy on thee.*

Wonderful as was your deliverance from a state of bondage in Egypt, your restoration from your present dispersed and calamitous situation will be an event much more extraordinary and memorable. This is particularly noticed by Jeremiah, Ch. xvi. 14. *Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, the Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but the Lord liveth who brought up the children of Israel from the land of the North, and from all the lands whither he had driven them; and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.*

2. You have long wisely ceased to make any exact computation of the *time* when these great events will take place. The prophecies were not intended to make us prophets, any farther than to give us an assurance of great and interesting future events, and some signs of their approach, in  
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order to furnish exercise for our faith, patience, and attentive observation. But the state of the world at present is such as cannot fail to engage your particular attention ; there being evident symptoms of the time of your deliverance being at hand. But when I say *at hand*, I do not mean this year or the next, or the next twenty or thirty years. For what are twenty or thirty years to the duration of your sufferings, and especially to that of your future prosperity. In the eye of God, or of a man who shall take into his view the whole of the divine dispensations respecting your nation, even the term of human life is but as a day. However, to make the exercise of your patience the easier to you, it has pleased God, *in whose hands are the hearts of all men, and who turns them as the rivers of water which way soever he pleases*, to abate the severity of your sufferings ; the treatment you now meet with being every where more favourable than it has been in time past.

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the other prophets who have enlarged the most on the circumstances of your restoration and future glory, have given no intimation of the *time* when these great events are to take place. But Daniel, who barely mentions your restoration, gives several notes of the time ; which as they have engaged much of my attention, I shall take the liberty to propose to yours, rejoicing

ing with you in the faintest appearance of the dawn of so glorious a day.

From several of the prophecies of Daniel I think it may be inferred that the time of your deliverance is at no great distance. The first of them occurs in the second chapter according to our division of the book, in which an account is given of a prophetic dream of Nebuchadnezzar, and the interpretation of it by Daniel. From this we find there were to be four great empires succeeding one another, and that the first of them was the Babylonian. This being admitted, the three others must be the Persian, the Macedonian, and the Roman. This last was to be divided into ten others, represented by the toes of the image, which were part of iron and part of clay; and to this description answer the ten kingdoms which arose out of the ruins of the Roman empire on its invasion by the northern nations of Europe. In this I believe all interpreters are agreed.

How long each of these empires, or the ten into which it was to be divided, were to continue, is not said; but the ten are to fall at the same time; by the fall of a stone cut out of a mountain without hands, which breaks the whole image in pieces, and then becomes a great mountain filling the whole earth. The state of things that follows, this is called a kingdom set up by the God a heaven, and which will never

ver be destroyed, or given to any other people. Dan.  
ii. 44.

The ten kingdoms in this prophecy are, no doubt, the present European monarchies, which from the breaking up of the Roman empire to this day have always been either exactly ten, or sufficiently near to that number. Whenever therefore, we see any of these monarchies destroyed, without any prospect of its rising again, we may conclude that the fall of the rest will soon follow; that the same train of causes and events which in the hand of providence is the means of overturning the first, will continue to operate till the destruction be universal. For it is one fall of the same stone that breaks them all. It is also evident from the prophecy, that the fall of these monarchies is to be *with violence*, and not by peaceable revolutions. The image is to be *broken in pieces*, and *wholly consumed*, yea to become like chaff in the summer threshing floor which the wind carries away, so that no place shall be found for them. The kingdom which the God of heaven will set up after this, and which is to continue for ever, is, no doubt, that of your nation, which, whether it will have a direct dominion over others, or not, will be the most distinguished, and in some way or other receive the homage, of all others.

The same succession of empires was represented to Daniel in the first year of Belshazzar, under the  
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figure of *four beasts*. Of this we have an account in the seventh chapter. Of these beasts the last, which was much stronger than any of the preceding, had ten horns, denoting, no doubt, the same ten kingdoms of the preceding prophecy. Among these horns there arises another *little horn*, before which *three others were plucked up by the roots*. It had *eyes like those of a man, and a mouth speaking great things*, Dan. vii, 8, 20. This horn represents a power which was to *make war upon the saints, and to prevail against them*. It was to *change times and laws*, and this power was to be given to it till the time came that the judgment, or supreme power, would be given to the saints of the most high, and they should possess the kingdom. The termination of this power, therefore, is the commencement of the *kingdom of heaven* mentioned in the preceding prophecy; and this power was to continue for a period denoted by the phrase *a time, times, and the dividing of time*, which parallel passages have led all interpreters to say must mean *three years and an half*; and each day denoting a year, the proper term will be 1260 years.

This little horn cannot be any other than the *papal power*, which arose from three different sources, viz. the exarchate of Ravenna, the kingdom of Lombardy, and the city and territory of Rome; and as it existed before the three horns were plucked

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ed up by the roots, it is not easy to fix the exact time of its commencement ; but on any probable computation its termination is at hand ; and with it that of all the other horns. For the beast itself is to be *slain*, its *body destroyed*, and *given to the burning flame*.

On this event *one like the son of man*, is brought to the ancient of days, in the clouds of heaven, and there is given to him dominion, and glory ; so that all nations, people, and languages, shall serve him. His dominion will be an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, 21, 14. In the interpretation it is said that this kingdom will be given to the *people of the saints of the most high*, 2, 27, so that it will not be a proper absolute monarchy, like those which had preceded it.

This *kingdom of saints* is, no doubt, the same that in the preceding prophecy is called *the kingdom of the God of heaven*, and this *son of man*, must be your Messiah. And his reign is to commence on the fall of the papal power, accompanied, as it will be, with that of all the powers represented by the other horns of the same beast, or the monarchies of Europe.

In the third year of Belshazzar, Daniel had another vision, in some respects of more difficult interpretation than the preceding ; but clearly

describing a power by which the *daily sacrifice* was to be taken away, and the place of the sanctuary cast down; and as this was never accomplished but in the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by Titus, we must conclude the Roman empire to be the power intended in the prophecy. This calamity was to terminate in *two thousand and three hundred days*, Dan. viii, 4. that is years, after a date not mentioned, but probably that of the vision. That this mode of computation is not improbable, may appear from the consideration of what God said to Abraham, Gen. xv, 13. *Thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years.* Now your ancestors were not in Egypt much more than two hundred years; but their servitude expired four hundred years after the prediction concerning it. The number of years abovementioned, viz. *two thousand and three hundred*, reckoned from the time of the vision, expired about the year 1760; and as only *centuries* are mentioned in the prophecy, we may expect the termination of this period of your calamity in less than half a century from this time.

In the next vision which Daniel had, in consequence of his anxiety about the termination of the *seventy years* which, according to the prediction of Jeremiah, the Babylonish captivity was to continue,

tinue, the most express mention is made of your future happy state which had been the subject of so many of the former prophecies ; but nothing is said that can enable us to fix the time of its commencement. To satisfy Daniel in some measure, he is informed of the return of his countrymen from that captivity, and of the rebuilding of Jerusalem. But he is at the same time informed that this state of peace and safety would not be perpetual ; for that both *the city and the sanctuary* would be again destroyed, *as with a flood* ; Dan. ix, 26, and that a much larger period than that of seventy years, even *seventy times seventy* (meaning not that exact number of years, for the expression is evidently indeterminate, and hyperbolical) would be necessary to the complete purification of the people, and the accomplishment of the great prophecies in their favour, viz. *to finish transgression, to make an end of sin, or the punishment of their sins, to make reconciliation for their iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up the vision, and prophecy* (or to verify and fulfil the prophecies concerning their final prosperity) and *to anoint the most holy*, or to build and consecrate the future temple, as described in the prophecy of Ezekiel. This description does not correspond to any thing that has yet taken place, and cannot agree to any thing short of the final and permanent state of your nation,. The literal rendering



rendering of what is commonly called *seventy weeks*, is *seventy times seventy*; and nothing but the greatness of the number, and the necessity that all interpreters have thought there was of limiting it to the time of the birth or death of Christ, could have led them to render it otherwise. Seventy times seventy, or 4900 years will certainly carry us back to a time something prior to the call of Abraham, which comprehends the whole of the history of your nation. But all this time has been but as the infancy of your nation, and a state of discipline to prepare you for your glorious destination. \*

\* The numbers *seven* and *seventy* are frequently used in the language of scripture for any number indefinitely great, and therefore exactness is not necessary in the interpretation of them when they occur in prophecy. Thus we read Gen. iii, 16, that vengeance would be taken on the person who should kill Cain *seven fold*, and Lamech says, v. 24, that if the death of Cain would be revenged seven fold his would be *seventy and seven fold*. In Isaiah, Ch. xxx, 26, it is said, that *the light of the sun shall be seven fold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people*. Thus when Peter asked Jesus whether he should forgive an offending and repenting brother *seven times*, he replied, Mat. xviii, 22, *I say not unto thee until seven times, but until seventy times seven*. So here, *seventy times seventy* seems to be used to denote a very great, but indefinite number of years.

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In the last of the visions of Daniel, which was in the third year of Cyrus, express mention is made of the deliverance of your nation, and of the resurrection of the dead, as coincident with it, Ch. xii, 1. *At that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people, and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. But thou O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book even to the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.* This increase of knowledge seems to be mentioned in this place as another mark of the same eventful period.

This prediction of the deliverance of your nation is here represented as following the overthrow of a nation that had made the conquest of the glorious land, which, no doubt, is Palestine, and also of Egypt, tho' not of that of Edomites, Moabites, or Ammonites, who are now among the Arabs. And this corresponds so exactly to the Turks, that

that we cannot suppose any other power to be intended. Your restoration, therefore, will follow the overthrow of their empire. Dan. xi, 40. *The king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow, and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown. But these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; and the Lybians and Ethiopians shall be at his steps. But tidings out of the East and out of the North shall trouble him; therefore he shall go forth with great fury, to destroy and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas, in the glorious holy mountain. Yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.*

If I were to bring before you the Christian prophecies in the book of *Revelation*, I could point out to you more, and more definite notes of the time, in which you are so much interested; but I forbear to do this in addressing Jews. In the preceding prophecies, the authority of which you acknowledge, there are sufficient indications of the  
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near approach to the termination of your present dispersion, and of your restoration to your own country, the consequent undisturbed and perpetual possession of it, and a state of unexampled prosperity and high distinction in it, the greatest and most respected of nations.

Putting all these notices together, the glorious time you have been so long waiting for may be expected soon after the breaking up of the present European monarchies, the extinction of the papal power, and the overthrow of the Turkish empire, three events which, according to the prophecies above recited, must be nearly coincident, a period you see to be marked by the spirit of prophecy as most calamitous, *a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation*, and yet a time of *increasing knowledge*.

And, surely, if this circumstance be one indication of the approach of the time we have been so long looking for, it cannot be very distant. For when, in the whole compass of history, do we read of so destructive a war, as that in which the European powers have been engaged the last six years? More pitched battles have been fought in this short space of time than in the two preceding centuries, which, however, were far from being peaceable; and in all wars death by the sword is but a small part of the distress and calamity occasioned  
by



by war. And yet, judging from appearances, this is but the beginning of troubles. There may be intervals of peace, but we see no prospect of a general and lasting pacification.

As to the monarchies of Europe, which, according to the clear sense of the prophecies, are destined to destruction, and nearly at the same time, what confidence can the most sanguine friends of any of them have in their permanance, when that of France, which to appearance was more firmly established than any of them, has fallen. No nation ever shewed a stronger attachment to their kings, and their government in general, than the French from the very beginning of the monarchy till the moment of the revolution.

An event more truly remarkable, and as we may say more ominous, tho' it has passed with little notice, because it was effected without fighting, is the fall of the papal power, which in time past made all the other powers of Europe to tremble. Yet having declined gradually, it has fallen at last, to adopt the language of the prophecy concerning it, *without hand*, with little or no effort, or exertion of power, while, if you will allow me to speak as a Christian, and quote the prophetical book of Revelation, Ch. xviii, 9, *the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication* (for this power is there compared to a harlot) *and lived deliciously with her, bewail*

*wail her, and lament over her, standing afar off, unable to give her any assistance.*

This power of the Pope, as a temporal prince, being one of the toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image, and one of the horns of Daniel's fourth beast, the fall of it will, no doubt, be followed by that of the other powers which are equally with it toes of the same image, and horns of the same beast. And tho' they are not actually fallen, and may, according to particular circumstances, have intervals of peace, they are shaken to their very centers; so that to a calm observer their fall may be looked for daily. There may be a revival of the papal power, and even of monarchy in France; but, considering the increasing prevalence of republican sentiments, any person may safely pronounce that it cannot be of long continuance. There are in all of them so many internal causes of dissolution, especially their enormous debts and taxes, and those continually accumulating, that even peace cannot be expected to save them, any more than it did France in the same circumstances. And indeed their governors seem to be more apprehensive of peace than they are of war.

All Protestant expositors of the prophecies without exception, consider the present monarchies of Europe as represented by the toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image, and the ten horns of Daniel's

fourth beast, and consequently as devoted to destruction. Dr. Hartley, who wrote in 1747, says *Essay on Man*, vol. 2, p. 368. "How near the dissolution of the present governments may be, would be great rashness to affirm. Christ will come in this sense also as a thief in the night.— He again says, p. 455. It would be great rashness to fix a time for the breaking of the storm that hangs over our heads, as it is blindness and infatuation not to see it, not to be aware that it may break. And yet this infatuation has always attended all falling states."

As to the Turkish empire, which must fall before you can have a permanent and peaceable settlement in your own country, it has been some time on the verge of destruction, and may be said to stand by the jealousy and forbearance of the neighbouring Christian powers. But the part the Turks have taken in the present war may accelerate this most desirable event. I call it most *desirable*, and it is on more accounts than one. The cause of science, of general liberty, and of civilization, as well as that of religion, call for it. The finest part of the surface of the earth, the best soil, and the most delightful climate, almost the cradle, as it is sometimes called, of the human race, the first peopled and civilized, is held by them in a state of servitude, barbarity, and great depopulation. Palestine,

leftine, the glory of all lands, which is now part of the Turkish empire, is almost without inhabitants. It is wholly uncultivated, keeping its sabbaths, empty, and ready to receive you. But till this power, which without deriving any advantage from it, keeps possession of that country, it is impossible that it can be yours. I therefore earnestly pray for its dissolution.

If the *increase of knowledge* of any kind be a mark of the approach of the happy events above-mentioned, it cannot be denied but we may be looking for them. For certainly a greater advance has been made in every branch of useful knowledge in the last half century, than in almost all preceding time.

3. In the present disturbed state of things, tho' deeply interested in the events, you will, I doubt not, see the wisdom of following the direction of the Divine Being by the prophet Isaiah, respecting this very time, Ch. xxvi, 20. After speaking of your recovery from your present low and depressed condition, saying *Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead*; denoting either an actual resurrection of your ancestors, or the revival of the nation, as from a state of death, it is immediately added, *Come my people enter into thy chamber, and shut thy doors about thee. Hide thyself as it were*  
for



*for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For behold the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity. The earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.*

Doubt not but your deliverance will be effected without your contrivance. God will open a way for you in the course of his providence, tho' not perhaps in so miraculous a manner as in your deliverance from Egypt. The history of your former attempts to recover the possession of your country by force of arms will, it is hoped, be a sufficient admonition to you on this occasion. I cannot, however, conceal my apprehensions for you on this head; as the prophecies contain intimations of some very considerable suffering previous to your restoration, similar to that of your ancestors in the interval between their leaving Egypt, and their settlement in the land of Canaan, in consequence of their impatience and refractory disposition. Attend particularly to the following passage in the prophecy of Ezekiel, Ch. xx, 33, &c. *As I live saith the Lord God, surely with a high hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you. And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries, wherein ye are scattered with a mighty hand and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, and I will*

*will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face. Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord God. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant. And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me, and I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel, and ye shall know that I am the Lord. That you will suffer much after your arrival in Palestine, and before your peaceable settlement in it, you are sufficiently apprized in the prophecy of Zechariah, Ch. xiv. But no doubt, those of you who, like Caleb and Joshua, exercise faith in God, and put your trust in him, will be preserved in every trial.*

4. As there are many express and clear predictions of great calamities that will befall all the nations that have oppressed you, you may be tempted to revenge yourselves on your enemies, or at least to rejoice in their misfortunes. But vengeance should be left to God, who is the only proper judge in the case. They are not the Christians of the present age of whom you have much reason to complain. Your persecutors have been long dead, and all sincere and intelligent Christians, notwithstanding

standing all that their ancestors, whenever you have had power, have suffered from you, bear you the greatest good will, and feel the most sincere compassion for you. The Supreme Being, the God of all the earth, punishes nations in their distant posterity; and, as in the case of the Amorites, Gen. xv, 16, often waits till *their iniquity be full*; in consequence of which many guilty individuals escape punishment, and many innocent persons suffer in this world. But as *his ways are not as our ways*, we should not endeavour to imitate him in this, and act by the same rule. Our faculties are not equal to so enlarged and comprehensive a plan of conduct, nor have we, like him, power to rectify the inequalities we make in this state by dispensations in any other. Cherish, therefore, a benevolent and forgiving spirit, as what is most pleasing to God, and will therefore be most advantageous to yourselves in the end.

5. As a motive to this general benevolence towards other nations, the reverse of the spirit with which you and other nations have hitherto regarded each other, attend to the many intimations that are given in your prophecies, that in future time there will be perfect harmony between you and the nations that were formerly the most hostile to you, even the Egyptians and Assyrians. Is. xix, 19. *In that day there shall be an altar to the Lord in*  
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*the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord. And it shall be for a sign and a witness unto the Lord of Hosts in the land of Egypt. For they shall cry unto the Lord because of the oppressors, and he shall send them a saviour and a great one, and he shall deliver them. And the Lord shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation, yea they shall vow a vow unto the Lord and perform it. And the Lord shall smite Egypt. He shall smite and heal it, and they shall return even to the Lord, and he shall be intreated of them, and shall heal them. In that day there shall be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrians shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptians into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land, whom the Lord of Hosts shall bless saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.*

You see that even the Egyptians are, in some sense or other, called *the people of God*, and therefore must be intitled to your respect and affection, as brethren. Express mention is made in your prophecies of many persons from all nations joining you on your restoration, and even becoming incorporated with you, as one nation, and enjoying all  
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the same privileges. *Is. xiv, 1. The Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet chuse Israel, and set them in their own land, and strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. Ez. xlvii, 22. So shall ye divide this land unto you, according to the tribes of Israel, And it shall come to pass that ye shall divide it by lot for an inheritance unto you, and to the strangers that sojourn among you, who shall beget children among you, and they shall be unto you as born in the country among the children of Israel. They shall have inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel. And it shall come to pass that in what tribe the stranger sojourneth, there shall ye give him his inheritance, saith the Lord God.*

6. As a spirit of revenge is very unbecoming the peculiar people of God, a spirit of pride and arrogance is no less so. And remember that God is the universal parent, the God of the numerous Gentiles, as well as of the single nation of Jews; and that, strictly speaking, *there is no respect of persons with him.* It was not for your sakes only, or chiefly, that you are distinguished from other nations; but because such a distinction was necessary to the instruction and moral discipline of the world. You ever have been, and still are, the instructors of mankind; but the institution of teachers, and also that of magistrates, respects those who  
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are to be taught and governed ; and, tho' occupying the most honourable place in society, they stand in the relation of *servants* to that great body of which they are members, and to whom they are subservient. They are the honourable *means* and *instruments*, in the great plan of providence, but not the *object* and *end*. That by your means all mankind are to be brought to the knowledge and worship of the true God, and therefore that this was the proper end and use of the distinction to which you are raised, is evident from the general current of prophecy. I shall call to your recollection a few passages to that purpose.

Is. ii. 2. *It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and rebuke many people, and they shall beat their swords into plow shares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*

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Is. xlii. 5.

Is. xlii. 5. *Thus saith the Lord God, he that created the heavens and stretched them out, he that spread forth the earth and that which cometh out of it, he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that dwell therein; I the Lord have called thee in righteousness. I will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.*

Is. lii. 9. *Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem. For the Lord hath comforted his people. He has redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.*

Is. xlv. 22. *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.* Is. lx. 3. *The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.* Ch. lxi. 11. *As the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it*  
it

*it to spring forth, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all nations.*

*If. lxvi. 18. It shall come that I will gather all nations and tongues, and they shall come and see my glory. And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles. And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord out of all nations to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord, and I will also take of them for priests and for Levites, saith the Lord.*

7. As you are a nation more immediately under the eye of God, to whom you stand in a nearer relation than any other people, you will, I doubt not, see peculiar reason for looking to him in earnest prayer and supplication in the present extraordinary situation of things. Both Moses and the later prophets admonish you, that your restoration will depend upon this, and on your thorough repentance of the sins which have brought the just judgments of God upon you. You cannot doubt the happy effect of sincere humiliation and contrition, especially as God has said,

*If. xlv. 19,*



II. xlv. 19, *the seed of Jacob shall not seek to me in vain.* There are many passages in the writings of your prophets that recommend earnest and general supplication, and with an express view to the present state of things. I shall recite a few of them. Lev. xxvi. 40. *If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers; then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham, and I will remember the land—When they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them. I am the Lord their God. But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God. I am the Lord.*

Deut. xxx. 1. “ And it shall come to pass  
 “ when all those things are come upon thee, the  
 “ blessing and the curse which I have set before  
 “ thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all  
 “ the nations whither the Lord thy God hath  
 “ driven thee, and shalt return unto the Lord thy  
 “ God, and shalt obey his voice, according to all  
 “ that I command thee this day, thou and thy  
 “ children, with all thine heart, and with all thy  
 “ soul; that then the Lord thy God will turn thy  
 “ captivity,

“captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and  
“will return, and gather thee from all the nations  
“whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee.  
“If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost  
“parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy  
“God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee.  
“And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the  
“land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt  
“possess it; and he will do thee good, and multi-  
“ply thee above thy fathers. And the Lord thy  
“God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of  
“thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy  
“heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest  
“live. And the Lord thy God will put all these  
“curfes upon thine enemies, and on them that hated  
“thee and persecuted thee. And thou shalt return  
“and obey the voice of the Lord, and do all his  
“commandments, which I command thee this day.”

In the book of Ezekiel there is a passage more  
exprefsly to the purpose than even this. Ch. xxxvi.  
24. “I will take you from among the heathen,  
“and gather you from all countries, and will bring  
“you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle  
“clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean.  
“From all your filthiness, and from all your idols,  
“will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give  
“you, and a new spirit will I put within you;  
“and

“ and I will take away the stony heart out of your  
“ flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And  
“ I will put my spirit within you, and cause you  
“ to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judg-  
“ ments and do them. And ye shall dwell in the  
“ land which I gave to your fathers, and ye shall  
“ be my people, and I will be your God—Thus  
“ saith the Lord God, in the day that I shall have  
“ cleansed you from all your iniquities, I will also  
“ cause you to dwell in the cities, and the walls shall  
“ be builded, and the desolate land shall be tilled ;  
“ whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that  
“ passed by. And they shall say, This land that  
“ was desolate is become like the garden of Eden,  
“ and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are  
“ become fenced, and inhabited. Then the hea-  
“ then that are left round about you shall know  
“ that I the Lord build the ruined places, and  
“ plant that which was desolate. I the Lord have  
“ spoken it, and I will do it. Thus saith the Lord  
“ God, I will yet for this be inquired of by the  
“ house of Israel, to do it for them, &c.

Here you see what is incumbent upon you, and expected of you, before your restoration. Humble yourselves, then, before God in earnest prayer, and have times set apart for the purpose. Many pious Christians will join you.

8. That

8. That your complete reformation will be effected, at least after your restoration, is expressly foretold in many prophecies, some of which I have incidently quoted ; but the most particular account of your repentance and contrition is contained in the prophecy of Zechariah, and it is there represented as taking place after your return, when your tribes and families shall be distinguished from each other, which now they are not.

Zec. xii. 6. “ In that day will I make the  
“ governors of Judah like a hearth of fire among  
“ the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf, and  
“ they shall devour all the people round about, on  
“ the right hand and on the left, and Jerusalem  
“ shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in  
“ Jerusalem. In that day shall the Lord defend  
“ the inhabitants of Jerusalem ; and he that is fee-  
“ ble among them at that day shall be as David,  
“ and the house of David shall be as God, as the  
“ angel of the Lord before them. And it shall  
“ come to pass in that day that I will seek to de-  
“ stroy all the nations that come against Jerusa-  
“ lem. And I will pour upon the house of Da-  
“ vid, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the  
“ spirit of grace, and of supplications, and they  
“ shall look upon him whom they have pierced,  
“ and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth  
“ for



“ for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him  
 “ as one that is in bitterness for his first born. In  
 “ that day shall there a great mourning in Jerusa-  
 “ lem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon, in the  
 “ valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn,  
 “ every family apart, and their wives apart; the  
 “ family of David apart, and their wives apart;  
 “ the family of the house of Nathan apart, and  
 “ their wives apart; the family of the house of  
 “ Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of  
 “ Shimei apart, and their wives apart. All the  
 “ families that remain, every family apart, and  
 “ their wives apart. In that day there shall be  
 “ a fountain opened to the house of David, and  
 “ to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for  
 “ uncleanness,” &c.

We Christians have no doubt but that this re-  
 fers to your being convinced of the sin of your an-  
 cestors in the death of Jesus, the greatest prophet  
 that God ever sent to your nation. The language  
 of the prophet describes the very manner in which  
 he was put to death, and it cannot without force  
 be interpreted of any other person. The reading  
 that I follow, viz. *him* for *me*, in v10, is not only  
 agreeable to the quotation of the passage in the  
 New Testament, but to many manuscripts. So  
 also it is quoted by many of your own writers.

Besides,

Besides, all the copies have *him* in the next and corresponding clause, viz. *they shall mourn for him*, which cannot, in common construction, be any other than *him whom they had pierced*. This mourning your S. Jarchi says, the rabbins suppose will be for *the Messiah the son of Joseph, who will be put to death*. But the hypothesis of your rabbins concerning *two Messiahs*, one a suffering and the other a triumphant one, has no foundation in the scriptures.

From this remarkable prophecy I cannot help inferring that your nation in general will not be convinced that Jesus was a true prophet, and consequently of the great sin of your ancestors in putting him to death, till after your return; and that this conviction will be produced by his personal appearance to you, as to your countryman Paul, who before that was as incredulous on the subject as any of you can now be. I am willing, however, to hope that, tho' not your nation in general, yet that some candid individuals among you, may be satisfied on this head before that event.

Permit me, who am a Christian, to write in that character; and as no offence is intended, I hope that none will be taken by any of you. You, as Jews, will think all our arguments in support of Christianity to have no weight, but the proposal of

them by one who writes, as he thinks, from the pure love of truth, tho' you will think it mere prejudice, cannot do you any harm.

9. I formerly took the liberty to address you on this subject, and had the happiness to find you were satisfied that I wrote from the purest motives, and a sincere respect and good will to your nation. Having then advanced all that I thought necessary for the purpose, I shall not repeat it here. But I cannot help observing that, tho' one of your nation, a person whom I well know and respect, replied to me, he did not undertake to refute my principal argument, viz. that from *historical evidence*. He did not pretend to point out any defect in the arguments that I advanced for Jesus having wrought real miracles, for his having died, and having risen from the dead. And if the gospel history of those facts be true, whatever may be objected to Christianity on other accounts, the divine mission of Jesus will be unquestionable. God would never have suffered any person, pretending to come from him, to impose upon your nation, and the whole world, in so egregious a manner, as Jesus must have done if he had been an impostor. Would God have raised an impostor to life, after a public execution? And yet, in my discourse on that subject, I have shewn that this one fact has  
the

the most convincing evidence that any fact of the kind could possibly have.

If you attentively consider the character of Jesus, his great simplicity, his piety, his benevolence, and every other virtue, you must be satisfied that he was incapable of imposture. Compare his character and conduct with that of Mahomet, or any other known impostor, and this argument, of the internal kind, must strike you in a forcible manner. Besides, how was it possible for such a religion as the Christian, preached by persons in low stations, without the advantage of learned education, to have established itself in the world, opposed as it was by every obstacle that could be thrown in its way, if it had not been supported by truth, and the God of truth ?

The unbelief of your nation in general has answered an important purpose in the plan of divine providence ; as nothing else could have given so much satisfaction that Christianity received no aid from civil government, and that the books of your scriptures are genuine writings, not imposed upon the world by Christians. But this great end being now completely answered by the continuance of your incredulity for such a length of time, I hope the time is approaching when as the apostle says, Rom. xi. 26, *all Israel will be saved*, an event



event which will be followed by the conversion of the Gentiles in general. Your restoration cannot fail to convince the world of the truth of your religion; and in those circumstances your conversion to Christianity cannot fail to draw after it that of the whole world. God will, no doubt, accomplish both these desirable events in the most proper time; and that this time, the commencement, of the kingdom of God and of the Messiah, may soon come, is the earnest prayer of every Christian.

With the greatest respect and affection

I subscribe myself your brother in the sole  
worship of the God of your Fathers,

J. PRIESTLEY.

NORTHUMBERLAND, *October* 1, 1799.

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